

# Bird-Lore

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## Cæsar and Calpurnia

By CAROLYN SHELDON, Washington, D. C.

**A**BOUT a mile east of Lake Kedgemakooge in central Nova Scotia lies Mountain Lake, wild and beautiful. Rising out of the water, in one bay, is a large flat rock on which a pair of Great Black-backed Gulls have been accustomed to breed for many years. On June 16 it was occupied by two youngsters, who had pecked open their eggshells less than ten days before. Nevertheless, as a red canoe glided toward their rock, they slid quickly into the water. This was, perhaps, their first bath, but they took to it quite naturally.

We felt that we could give these little Gulls a much more comfortable home until they had grown old enough to fly. So we took them on a voyage across Kedgemakooge where they were greeted at our cabin and fed as many minnows as they could eat. They were very hungry and ate greedily, yet had instinct enough to swallow the fish head first. We even deliberately offered them minnows tail first but they did not attempt to swallow them until they had turned them around.

While they were eating we had time to examine them closely. They had black bills, large webbed feet, and were covered with soft fuscous speckled down, the markings especially on their heads being arranged in nearly the same order.

When they seemed unable to swallow another morsel, we took them down a short hill through the woods to our dock, and set them on the ground among some rocks, where we had carefully constructed a little nest of leaves; but they seemed to prefer lying on the bare rocks, which were more like the only nest they had known in their short lives. However, before they had been with us long, they found that, by crawling slowly over the rough rocks, they were able to reach the edge of the woods, where, sheltered from the wind and rain, they seemed to enjoy the soft warm leaves. They rarely went in swimming until their feathers were well grown, because their down when wet was no protection to their bodies.

Being too young to have learned to fear man, they soon became accustomed to us and were very tame. We always whistled as we approached them, and after a few days they knew when we were coming, and would run up to greet us, crying hungrily, and opening their mouths wide to receive food.

When night came we put them into a large wooden box, covered with wire netting, so that no mink or other nocturnal enemy could steal upon them, asleep and helpless. We were quite puzzled in deciding what to name them. The Great Black-backed Gull is the largest, the most beautiful and kingly of all the Gulls, being, when in full adult plumage, pure white except for the dark slaty back and wings, the latter edged with white; therefore we agreed to call these two Cæsar and Calpurnia, names befitting their rank. They grew rapidly and after they had been with us about ten days stout quills began to grow out on their wings. As they became larger their appetite increased, and, consequently, we were kept busy fishing. On June 25 we were all going camping about sixteen miles away, to Beaver Lake, a charming little lake, fed by springs, and as clear as crystal everywhere. There was nobody to take care of the pets in our absence so they had to go along in their basket.

At camp they adapted themselves immediately to new surroundings and either lay in a sunny hollow under the bushes or stood on a large flat rock on the shore. When they were hungry they came up to the tents, about 50 yards from the water.

At intervals during the day we went down to feed them two fish apiece,



CÆSAR AND CALPURNIA

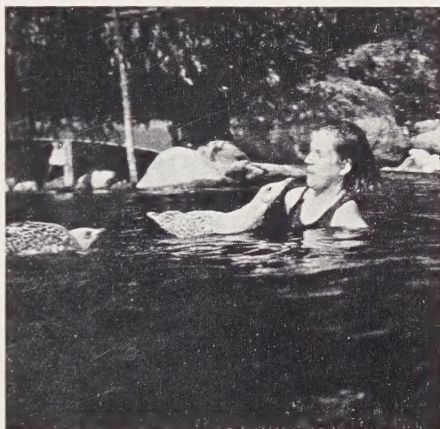
Shown in their speckled downy coats coming for their two fish apiece on the big rock by the lake shore only nine days after we had brought them home



chubs, perch, and shiners, usually four to five inches long. Together they ate about ten a day, but later they required fifteen or twenty a day.

Once we caught two half-pound trout which were almost larger than the Gulls themselves; the birds were hungry and eagerly seized the fish in their bills. Cæsar, the larger of the two, succeeded in getting one down all except the tail, but little Calpurnia could swallow only part of hers with a great effort, and, try as she could, the rest would not go down, so there she sat with half of the fish protruding out of her bill. We tried to take it away but she did not want to be deprived of such a good square meal and turned to run, whereupon the fish tripped her up and prevented her escape. Finally we got it away and cut it into pieces, one of which she swallowed easily.

On July 3 we returned to Kedge-makooge and put Cæsar and Calpurnia down at our dock again. We fed them well in the morning, but three hours later a familiar screaming was heard outside and the hungry little birds had come all the way up the steep hill through the woods to our cabin. When they saw us they came running quickly toward us, confidently hoping for something to eat. We had no fish for them, but we managed to fill them up on bread and meat scraps. Then they could not find their way back, so we picked them up and carried them down to the shore.



IN SWIMMING WITH THE GULLS

When well feathered they were still tame and would join us in our daily swims, often coming up and gently pecking us on our lips

By July 20 they had acquired all their feathers, which were very pretty in the mottled buffy-brown juvenal plumage. They tried often to fly, by jumping into the air and vigorously flapping their wings. After a little practice Cæsar succeeded in flying about three feet over the water and then swam around, holding his head up very high as though he had accomplished a wonderful thing. Calpurnia tried to show him that she could do just as well, but she could not quite manage it. They were swimming around everywhere and while we were in bathing they ducked for our hands and legs under water. When we faced them, they came toward us fearlessly and gently pecked our lips and cheeks. From this time, during our daily swim, they followed us everywhere near the shore, and, with a little coaxing, would be persuaded to accompany us as we swam far out into the lake.

It was not very long before our Gulls were able to fly quite a distance and then they often went out to the raft but would come swimming in when we

appeared on the shore. On rising from the surface of the lake they had not yet learned what to do with their legs which hung down awkwardly, trailing along the top of the water, and often impeding them from rising quickly into the air. Gradually, however, as they became more accustomed to flying, they learned how to straighten out their legs under their tails.

About this time we banded them, encircling the leg of each with a light aluminum ring, bearing a number so we would know them if they should return another year.



NEITHER OF THE YOUNG GULLS LIKED TO BE HANDLED, BUT WHEN HELD GENTLY IN A COMFORTABLE WAY THEY WERE QUIET AND CONTENTED

The Gulls were growing too big for the box with wire on it, so we decided that they were old enough to take care of themselves and left them out at night. After breakfast on July 29, we went down to the shore to feed them. Everything seemed unusually quiet and we wondered why Cæsar and Calpurnia did not come crying toward us as they generally did at our first sound. We started to walk down along the beach in search of them, when right before us lay the dead body of poor Cæsar. We feared that something had happened to Calpurnia also but we whistled and she came

into sight, crying loudly. We suspected that a mink had killed her brother as we found his footprints in the sand.

After that tragedy poor little Calpurnia seemed more than usually glad to see us when we paid her visits, and continued to be as tame as ever.

One day we went across the lake, a mile away, to pick raspberries on Indian Point. The little Gull had seen us go and after we had been there about an hour we heard her cries and she appeared circling above the undergrowth and piles of brush in the clearings, looking down at us. Once or twice she came quite near and we were not sure whether she would land or not, but, as there were no smooth bare pieces of ground large enough, she seemed frightened to try it. However, when we emerged from the trees on the sandy beach she lit



in the water about ten feet away and came toward us. We got into the canoe and put her in also, but when we were nearly half-way across she flew out and went on to the dock. When we arrived we fed her as many small fish as she would eat. After that she used to follow us every time we went raspberrying.

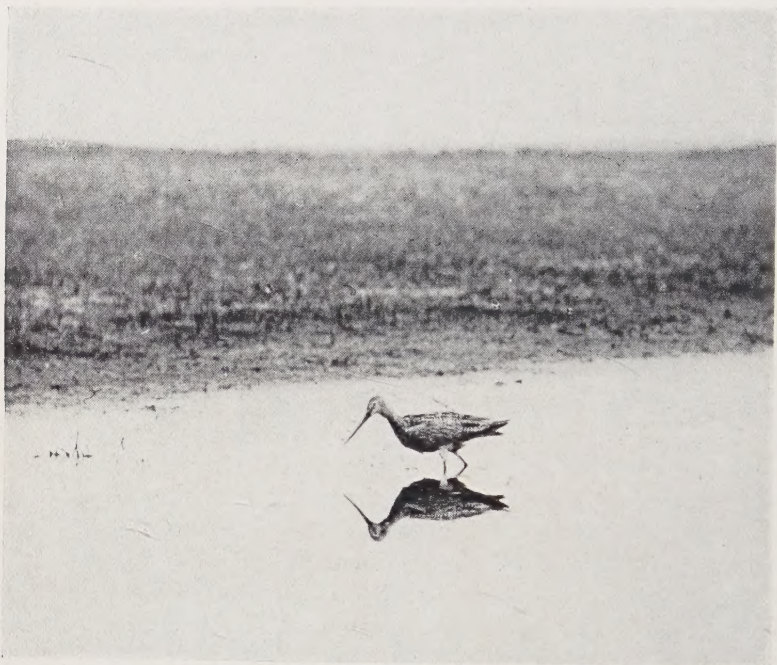
In August we made another trip to Beaver Lake and took Calpurnia. While at camp she spent most of the time during the first few days on a rock in the lake, not far away from our tents. When we whistled she came flying to the dock, and often walked up around the fireplace, pecking curiously at the moss and small plants growing everywhere. She enjoyed riding in the canoe and when one of us went out alone in the stern she would hop up in the bow and stand there facing the paddler.

She soon got into the habit of leaving Beaver Lake and joining other Gulls over in Pescawah, about a half mile away. One day my sister and a guide were about in the middle of Pescawah when they perceived three Gulls flying overhead. One of them was evidently Calpurnia, and when my sister whistled she left the others and dropped into the water a little way from the canoe. She followed it for a short distance and then returned to her companions.

Although she spent so much of her time at Pescawah, she came back to us when hungry and would usually walk up around the fireplace if we were there, without waiting for us to whistle.

On August 17, for the first time she did not return to be fed in the morning. Early before breakfast we had heard her crying over our heads. We were going back to Kedgemakooge after lunch and although we whistled and whistled it was in vain, she was not there. We even went over to Pescawah and whistled again but she never came back. Evidently she had joined some older Gulls on their journey to the sea where they pass the fall and winter.

During the two preceding summers we had brought up young Gulls until they flew south about the same time Calpurnia did. We never marked them so we had no way of distinguishing them from other Gulls, but Calpurnia carries our band with a number on it. Therefore, this summer we shall watch eagerly any Gull that comes near us and see if we can find our old friend and playmate. She will no longer need our help in obtaining food, but we hope that she will remember our whistle and show signs of friendliness instead of the fear and distrust of man so common among the wild Gulls.



THE MARBLED GODWIT'S MIRROR  
Photographed by H. H. Pittman Wauchope, Sask.



WHISTLING SWAN  
Photographed by George Shiras 3d, Currituck Sound, N. C.



## A Lesson in Civic Ornithology

By JOSEPH DIXON, Berkeley, Calif.

(Contribution from the Museum of Vertebrate Zoölogy of the University of California)



GULLS AND DUCKS WAITING ON PARK LAWN TO BE FED

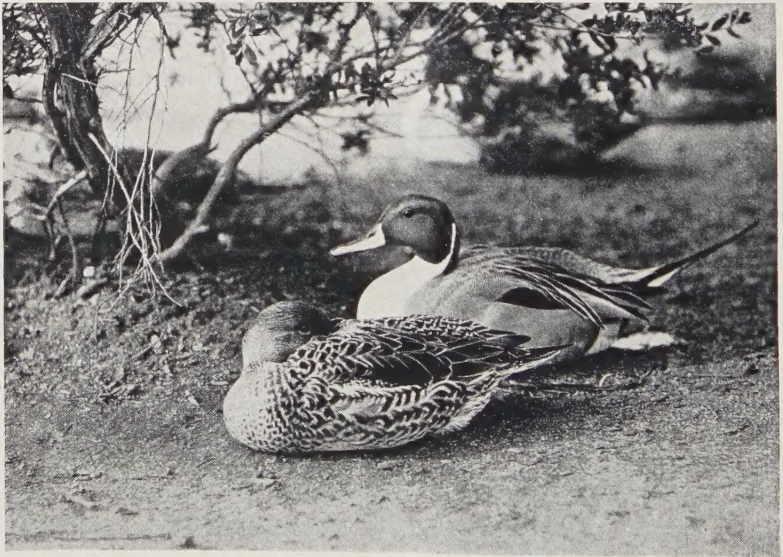
THE success that the city of Oakland, California, has attained in attracting migratory wild-fowl has become so well known that citizens in many other sections of the United States have inquired about the conditions and methods which have made Oaklands' success possible. In reply, it may be said, at the outset and briefly, that the four principal attractions, which are offered wild Ducks, at Lake Merritt, in estimated order of importance, are: sanctuary, food, drink, suitable loafing grounds.

It must be remembered in this connection that Lake Merritt, which is a triangular body of salt water covering somewhat less than one square mile, although located almost in the center of Oakland, is the oldest state game refuge in California, having been established by the Legislature in 1869. Furthermore, Lake Merritt has always been a natural wintering-ground for wild-fowl. It is located in a region where the winter climate is mild. Many people who live where the weather is severe during the winter have assured me that they would give anything to get wild Ducks to winter with them as they do in Oakland. While I do not believe it advisable to attempt to get migratory wild-fowl to winter in Greenland, the success that Jack Miner has had in getting wild Geese and even Ducks to winter at his home in Canada shows that where proper food, safety, and open water are provided, migrating wild-fowl will winter far north of their normal wintering range.



RIVER DUCKS AT DRINKING-FOUNTAIN

A suitable body of water, where the avian visitors can rest secure from their natural enemies, and especially from their human enemies with shotguns, is considered the major requirement. At Oakland, a large section at the east end of Lake Merritt is set off by a log boom, and boating is forbidden thereon during the winter months. Dogs are forbidden in that portion of the city park which adjoins the lake. No shooting is ever allowed there.



MANY OF THE PINTAILS SEEK SOME COVER, BUT REST WITH ONE EYE OPEN



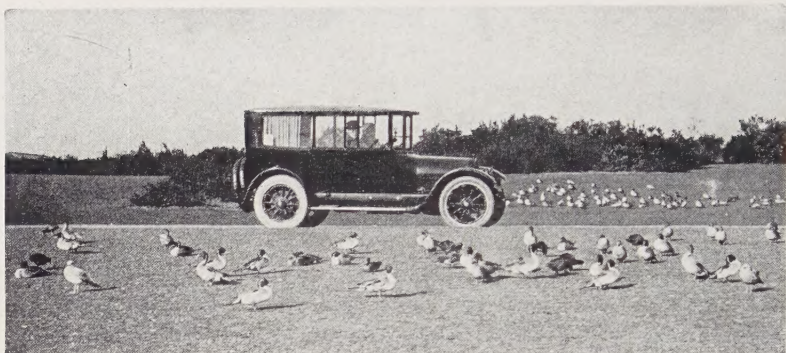


DUCKS MAY NOT BE ABLE TO READ, BUT—

For many years after the refuge was established, the fresh-water Ducks such as the Pintail, Baldpate, and Shoveler came out on the broad lawns and grazed far and wide at will. They do so still to some extent, but in more recent years they have been fed at fixed points daily at 10 A.M. and 4 P.M. The number of people coming to watch the Ducks at feeding time became so great that about five years ago it was necessary to fence off a part of the land so that the Ducks would not be crowded away from their dining-table at meal time by the throngs of visiting people. Signs were placed inside this enclosure stating, "*This space reserved for the Ducks,*" these signs serving as gentle hints for people to keep out. It would seem that even though the Ducks cannot read, they are quick to realize that they are safe there. Since the sea Ducks, such as the Canvasback, Scaup, Bufflehead, Golden-eye and Ruddy, rarely if ever came out on the lawns, a small sandy island was created about 100 yards offshore where they could go ashore to rest and to preen their feathers. Since the Ducks at Lake Merritt often seek some cover when ashore, the island was planted to suitable low shrubs. A low retaining wall was also provided around most of the island to prevent the waves from washing it away.

During the winter of 1918-19, four tons of whole barley were fed to the Ducks in the city parks of Oakland during a period of 77 days at a cost of





THE DUCKS HAVE LITTLE FEAR OF AUTOMOBILES

\$397.23. In the winter of 1926-27, the Ducks were fed 37,793 pounds of 'No. 1' feed barley at a cost of \$601.42. The amount of grain fed varies with the season, the average cost per year being about \$500. Now the Canvasbacks and other sea Ducks are also fed daily. Since these Ducks prefer to dive for their food, the whole barley is broadcast along the margin of the lake where the water is about 4 to 5 feet deep, and the Canvasbacks, being expert divers, have no trouble in gathering the grain from the bottom of the lake. Both the Pintails and Canvasbacks are fond of rice. I have found by repeated trials that in many instances rice is preferred to barley, but since barley is the cheaper, it is the grain that is fed.

Provision of clean fresh drinking water has proved to be one of the surest ways of attracting the river Ducks and of keeping them healthy and contented.



ON DECEMBER 28, 1918, THERE WERE BY ACTUAL COUNT, 5,000 WILD DUCKS  
AT LAKE MERRITT





WILD DUCKS ASLEEP ON CITY LAWN

Several shallow cement drinking basins with automatic valves are maintained along the lake shore, and recently an elaborate cement fresh-water swimming pool has been added. The Sea Ducks do not seem to care for, or to require, fresh water, as do the Shovelers, Pintails, and Baldpates.

During the past two winters several hundred of the river Ducks were banded, being captured in special cages at feeding time. The Pintails have become so used to automobiles that they pay little or no attention to them, but the banding game was new to them and they did not relish being handled by men. It is possible that they will get used to this handling in time, or, failing to meet these innovations, the more timid ones may go elsewhere. A close watch was kept this year at banding time and it was found that the Pintail population decreased considerably during banding operations, and remained below normal for several days after.



PINTAILS ASLEEP. A SAFE PLACE TO REST IS MOST ESSENTIAL

During the past ten years there has been a decided decrease in the total number of wild Ducks that have wintered at Lake Merritt. On December 28, 1918, there were 5,000 wild Ducks on the lake and adjacent lawns. This winter the number has been considerably less, this year's census totaling only 2,138. Fortunately, an annual census of the Ducks has been taken by members of the Audubon Association of the Pacific. This, together with comparable photographs which the writer has taken over a period of ten years, affords a fair basis for the statement that there has been a general decline in the Duck population. It is thought that this indicates a general decrease in the numbers of Ducks wintering in California. In other words, Lake Merritt is believed to be a fair barometer of our Duck population, and it is hoped that the wise and sane management of the Oakland Park Board will continue to keep Lake Merritt a real 'city of refuge' for our feathered friends, the Ducks.



A LARINE JIGGER

Western Gulls aboard S. S. *Manchuria*, off west coast of Mexico, a little south of Cape San Lucas, second week of April, 1926

Photographed by Frank Wood



## Bob, the Redhead

By MRS. JOHN FRANKLIN KYLER, Kirkwood, Ill.

ON JULY 24, 1926, word was sent to me that a large decayed tree in our village had been cut down, and in so doing had wrecked the home of a family of Red-headed Woodpeckers. There were three tiny babies, and though they were placed on an arbor, near a food-shelf where the parent birds often came, the latter were so frightened and so bewildered that they deserted their young ones. It was a very hot day when I was called to the rescue, and the poor little things were almost gasping their last.

It has been my privilege, as the Bird Woman of our little town, to raise quite a number of baby birds, but I had had no experience with Woodpeckers—and here were three, with almost no feathers and their eyes not even open. It looked rather hopeless, but I had such interesting experiences with other baby birds that I felt this family would certainly furnish new ones.

I brought them home and commenced the feeding process, which took place about every twenty minutes during the day for a week or more. And right here I learned something new; that when my hand made a shadow above them, every mouth popped wide open, and then down would go the food. I decided that, since their eyes were not yet open, they mistook the shadow for the arrival of Mother Redhead. Anyway, it solved the difficulty of getting their mouths open. First I fed them bread moistened in water, then hard-boiled egg, suet, and oatmeal with cream and sugar. For feeding baby birds I have always used a pair of dental pliers, with the points blunted, and they prove most satisfactory. It has always been surprising to me how most birds take so readily to drinking water from a teaspoon. These were no exception, for they acted as though Mother Redhead had always used a silver spoon when serving drinks.

In one week from the day I took the birds, their eyes commenced to open, and after that they rapidly got more interesting. So far they had been living in a box about two feet square and the same depth, and I had my Bird Man fasten a section of a decayed tree in the center of the box. It was astonishing how the little fellows immediately commenced to climb and to hammer, and even going to sleep flattened against the stump. Their box was kept in a large screened porch, and after about two weeks they left the box and spent most of their time climbing up and down the wire screen. At night they would climb to the top, huddle together in a corner, and go to sleep. They still seemed like such babies that the first night or two they did this I felt sure they would get tired and fall before morning, but they did not.

By this time the birds were getting quite well feathered, but of course, all clothed in dull black and white, which seemed to surprise a great many people, and they would look at me in a most puzzled manner when I volunteered the information that the birds were Red-headed Woodpeckers.

When the birds were four weeks old, we celebrated the event by taking them outdoors for the first time, the excursion into the big world being made by all three of them riding on my head. I put them on the trunk of a pear tree, and they at once commenced to climb, and to hunt in the crevices of the bark for hidden delicacies. But I decided their search must not have proved very successful, for in about an hour they began to act very uneasy, and when I took their food and stood at the foot of the tree, they all came down, backwards, and ate ravenously. They then hopped to my shoulder and seemed very happy to go back to their porch-home again.

For three weeks I continued taking the birds outdoors, and trying to persuade them to stay out and hunt their own living, but they would come back to the porch several times a day and coax to be fed, and would always come in at night. Finally, on the evening of September 15, one of them stayed up in a tree, but he must have felt either very nervous or else that he was doing something quite wonderful, for he 'talked' to me constantly until dark; but he was on hand bright and early the next morning for breakfast. A couple of evenings after this, Number 2 decided to sever home ties and be a 'big bird,' so only one little fellow came in that night. We were having terrific rains at this time, which lasted for days, and several times the birds came back in the porch and stayed two or three days at a time, waiting for sunshine.

The last time I saw them was October 4, and that night it poured in torrents all night, and the next morning the mercury was down to 40 degrees, so we have always felt much concerned as to their fate. They all wore the little aluminum 'anklets,' so if any bird-bander ever has any news of them, I would be very glad to hear it.

And now begins the story of Bob, the third and last of my foster family; and at this time, Feb. 24, 1927, he is still with us and is sitting on my shoulder as I write, occasionally pecking my ear or pulling my hair, to attract my attention.

Bob was put out in the trees all the fall with the others, but seemed even more of a pet than the other two. For some unaccountable reason, he kept losing his primary wing-feathers and, of course, could not fly well on that account. Then I noticed that his tail-feathers were also disappearing and, on investigating I found they were not coming out but were breaking off. The only explanation I could think of was that he was either not getting the proper food, or else he had worn them off by climbing incessantly up and down the wire screen. He finally lost all his tail-feathers, so it was at this period of his life and for this reason that he was christened 'Bob,' though perhaps, it should have been 'Bobette.' Possibly because of this loss of plumage, he felt he was not equal to the long journey to the Southland, and so decided to stay with us.

On November 2 it became so cold that it was necessary to move Bob into the house; so the Bird Man built a screen house for him, three feet high by two feet square, with one side open. There is a door for this open side, which we expected to use when we were away from home, but it has never been used,



as we could not bring ourselves to cage a wild bird, so Bob has always had 'right-of-way' to the whole house. In the back of his cage and near the top is his sleeping apartment—a box built according to Woodpeckers' specifications; fastened to the floor of the cage is a stump with rough bark, in which I wedge his food and where he feeds himself.

This food question has certainly been a problem, as Bob's appetite is very capricious and it keeps me guessing to know what to try next. He will eat certain things with relish for two to three weeks, then all of a sudden will refuse them; and then I keep trying until I find something else which meets with his approval. And, strange to say, when once he tires of an article of food, he never goes back to it. Among the many and varied articles served on his menu the last six months are the following: bread moistened with water, hard-boiled eggs, suet, oatmeal with cream and sugar, lean beef put through food chopper, cheese, both cottage and American, almonds put through food chopper, apples, grapes, fresh tomatoes, walnuts and butternuts, crackers softened in water, bananas, bran with cream and sugar, and at this writing his bill-of-fare consists of potatoes, either boiled, baked or mashed, buckwheat cakes, head lettuce, pie crust and cocoanut candy. Occasionally in the fall, I was fortunate enough to catch a fly or a miller for him, and of course he was delighted with those, but he could not understand why I did not give him more of that kind of food.

Bob always comes to the table (on my shoulder) for breakfast and dinner, but is usually asleep at supper time, though often, after having had a nap, he likes to come in the living-room and spend an hour or so on my shoulder, sometimes tucking his head under his wing and taking a nap, even with a concert coming in loud and strong over the radio. At breakfast he watches me eat my orange or grapefruit, in which he is not at all interested, but when I



'LISTENING IN'

begin to put the cream and sugar on my bran, he gets quite excited, talking in soft little chuckles of anticipation and hopping down my arm as far as my elbow but never onto the table. The bran is the one thing of which he has not tired, but he will only eat it at breakfast time. After finishing his bran he always wants a few sips of water from my glass, and if I neglect to offer it to him, he tries to push his bill in the glass while I am drinking. If I offer him one more bite of food than he cares for, not having a tree handy in which to store it, he solves the difficulty by tucking it in my hair and covering it all up nicely.

We found that his cage was simply a place to eat and sleep, as he is never contented unless in the room with either the Bird Man or myself. In the living-room, Bob immediately selected as his very own a reed rocker in a sunny bay-window. This chair furnished good 'footing,' also a most excellent place to hammer, which he has done so continuously and so successfully that the chair will be relegated to the junk-pile when he goes outdoors in the spring.

Bob does so many cunning little tricks, one of them being his great curiosity when I talk at the telephone. He flies to my shoulder—always the left one—and chatters softly, pecking at the receiver or at my hand. Another of his tricks, which I have him 'do for company,' is to put him on the floor, and, as it is polished, he cannot get a good start to fly, so I stand near and he hops on my foot, then climbs to my shoulder just as he would climb a tree.

But like all spoiled youngsters, Bob has some bad habits, the worst, I think, being his persistent fondness for climbing the lace curtains, getting above the windows and hammering splinters out of the woodwork and even pulling the paper off the wall. This was going a little too far, so I would bring a broom in the room, and he would cry with terror and fly to my shoulder. He soon learned that he was not to go above the windows, but if I went out of the room I would often find him there when I returned; but he would fly down at once, not waiting for the broom. All three of the birds, from the time they got their eyes open, would almost go into hysterics at sight of a broom, but I was never able to account for this. If I put Bob on my shoulder when I sweep he seems to feel safe, but if I do not, he gets 'panicky' and flies all over the room. He is also desperately afraid of dogs, and when he sees one coming in the yard, he 'sounds his rattle' most vociferously, and that means that I am to come to the rescue. He at once flies to my shoulder and then changes his note of fright for one of bravado and scolding.

The Bird Man has been especially interested in the idea of watching Bob get his bright colored spring clothes and be a real 'honest to goodness' Redhead. As early as last October we could see a few little flecks of red around his bill, and now the red is showing all through the black on his head and neck, and his breast is getting much lighter.

So ends the story of Bob up to date, and the Bird Man and I often talk, with many misgivings, about his fate when he is sent outdoors in the spring to join his companions.



# Notes from Field and Study

## Why Do Birds Come Back?

"The Cormorants are coming back," said Mr. W. H. Over, the curator, as I stepped into the office of the University Museum at Vermillion, South Dakota. "They are nesting this year near Webster, in Day County, and have been doing so now for two or three years. Earlier they did not nest in South Dakota, and I cannot imagine the reason for their return."

A few years ago, in company with Mr. Patton of Artesian, South Dakota, an observer of twenty-five years' experience, I came upon a colony of Eared Grebes in a slough near Mr. Patton's home. Mr. Patton was greatly surprised and exclaimed: "Those birds have not nested here for ten years."

I have just returned from a birding trip to the northern part of South Dakota, passing through Parker, Madison, Watertown and Waubay, and to my surprise the Lark Buntings are nesting by hundreds in this far eastern part of the state, especially north and south of Watertown. These are birds of the unbroken prairie and have pushed westward as the land has been broken up. For years not one has been seen where this year they are plentiful. In South Dakota their principal nesting-grounds extend from the unbroken prairies east of the Missouri River to the Black Hills.

I asked an experienced collector to explain the action of the Buntings, and he suggested that possibly a strong wind during their migration had driven them eastward of their usual nesting-grounds. This seems plausible, and yet it would hardly explain the return of the Cormorants and Eared Grebes, since they are more powerful fliers.—CRAIG S. THOMS, *Vermillion, S. Dak.*

## Strange Nesting-Sites

My sister lives on a 300-acre farm which, besides having large tracts of old and young pines and other woods of mixed species, has orchards and shade trees near the buildings.

There are also long shaded lanes with plenty of shrubbery along the walls, and pastures dotted with wild-apple trees, pines, ground juniper and berry bushes. Besides these assets, there are picturesque little brooks that wind in and out of woods and pastures, a pond and a large swamp. In short, the whole farm is a true paradise for birds where they receive all protection possible. Natural nesting sites are legion and a host of birds appropriate them.

One pair or more of Robins, however, have chosen quite unusual places for their homes, and had they not started housekeeping early, would have put my brother-in-law to no slight inconvenience.

Two years ago when more housing space was needed for farm implements the hay-wagon was drawn out beside the barn. It stood in an open, treeless yard. The new shed was being put up close by when some Robins built a nest under the wagon body on one side of the reach, well toward the front. The bird brooded her eggs quite fearlessly whenever we stooped to inspect the nest, and when the little ones were hatched I suggested to my brother that he hitch in his horses and drive to town and see if the parent bird would fly along side and feed her young whenever he stopped, as did the Robin John Burroughs wrote about, but my brother loved Mother Robin and had too much regard for her feelings to try the experiment. It was, however, with a bit of relief that he saw the last nestling fly, as the grass had been ripening fast and the haying season was close at hand.

Last spring a Robin acted queerly around the new shed. It was thought that its mate might have been shut in by accident; but there was no bird inside the building and after a few days the Robin ceased to haunt the place. This spring one of the doors of the shed was left open for a time and my sister noticed a collection of dried grasses on top of the grass bar of the mowing machine. Her suspicions were aroused and the shed door was left open. The next day a Robin's

nest was well begun. Besides housing machinery, the shed is used as a garage and an automobile stands directly in front of the mowing machine. The Robin had no fear of the car or of us so long as we stayed in it. We often watched her from the open door as she sat on her nest on that high, exposed elevation, seeming mistress of all she surveyed but she grew uneasy whenever we entered the shed and soon left the nest. For this reason and the location of the machine with reference to the light in the building, my attempts to photograph bird and nest were failures.

When we drove in the car at night, the headlights were within six feet of the nest, but the bird never stirred, nor did she leave the nest whether we got out of the car with the lights still on or off.

There were three eggs in the nest and these hatched May 11 and 12. On May 18, my brother drove his car in just at dusk and sat watching the nestlings. Soon one of the adult birds brought food to the nest, and after a little hesitation the other parent came. When too dark to watch, the lights were turned on and both birds continued the evening feeding.

About ten days after the young Robins had flown, a partially built Robin's nest was discovered on a beam in the same shed. The open door is still a necessity, otherwise the Robin showed more consideration for the rights and property of others in this choice of a nesting site.—CLARA EVERETT REED, *Brookfield, Mass.*

#### A Hummer's Bath

During the past two summers, there have been two pairs of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds nesting in the bushes beside my garden. This year I have seen, so far, only one pair.

A few days ago, when I was watering the cabbages, the male Hummingbird flew into the spray of the watering pot, then lit on a board on which I was standing, within four inches of my foot. When I gently turned the spray on him he flew up but soon settled again on the ground in front of me. Again I turned the spray on him, and this time he remained three or four seconds, fluttering his

wings, until he was well drenched, and then flew over to the fence to dry off.

This afternoon (June 15), my Hummingbird repeated his bath. Very soon after I had begun watering he came flying through the spray, and immediately lit on the ground, where he remained under a heavy shower from the hose until there were little pools of water around him. When he rose from the ground he hovered a few moments, shaking the water from his body, and then flew away.—HARRISON W. SMITH, *Springfield, Me.*

#### Barn Owls in Pennsylvania

On July 25, while walking through the woods about a quarter mile from my home, I heard queer noises from a hole in a large black oak tree about twenty-five feet from the ground. I sat down by a nearby tree and with my flashlight I could plainly see at close distance seven 'Monkey-faced' or Barn Owls emerge from the tree. In a distant tree I counted five more. When the woods was totally dark, the place was fairly alive with screaming Owls. To me it was a very interesting thing to watch, as I have been told that Barn Owls are not common in Pennsylvania.—J. KARL CROUTHAMEL, *Wycombe, Pa.*

#### A Nest in a Greenhouse and Other Notes

Song Sparrows have quite often been seen in a greenhouse in North Caldwell, N. J., but it was after one had been flushed several times from the same place in a carnation patch before anyone suspected that a bird might build its nest inside. Yet an investigation showed a nest containing four eggs which were successfully incubated and soon four more Sparrows joined the bird population.

An English Sparrow was seen standing on the edge of a pail used to catch the drippings from a refrigerator and as each drop formed he would reach up and bit it off. This was the more peculiar because a brook with good, running, water was less than two hundred feet away.

A barrel of rubbish was left in the back yard with a thermos bottle on top. A House



Wren was quick to seize the opportunity of having such an ideal home and that very day a nest was started. When the barrel was removed, the thermos bottle was tied to a nearby tree, and the Wrens did not seem to mind the change but finished their task of raising a family in the new location.—EDWIN STEARNS, JR., *Caldwell, N. J.*

### Outwitting the English Sparrow

Our reason for wishing to outwit the English Sparrows is not that we dislike them. We have observed them for several years and consider them both interesting and useful. However, we cannot afford to feed them on sunflower seeds worth twenty cents a pound. If a few Sparrows find a dainty of that sort, they quickly summon all their relatives, friends, and neighbors to share it with them.

For several years three little Chickadees, a pair of Downy Woodpeckers, and one or two Nuthatches have made our yard their headquarters. Chickadees are very fond of sunflower seeds, and it is interesting to watch one shell a seed. He carries it to a smooth branch of a tree, quickly tucks it under his feet so that one tiny foot stands on each end of the seed, hammers vigorously between his feet till the shell is broken, then picks out the kernel and proceeds to eat it.

It puzzled us at first to know how to keep the Sparrows from taking the seeds that we wished to provide for the Chickadees, so we tried an experiment. We placed the sunflower seeds in a shallow box and then took one-inch mesh wire, such as is used for chicken yards, and bent it about the box like a cage. The Chickadees are so tiny that they slipped through the meshes of the wire easily, but the Sparrows could not do this and soon gave up trying.

A treat for the Downies and Nuthatches is provided by tying strings of raw peanuts around the trees. They drill holes in the shells and take out the kernels. The Chickadees sometimes do this too, but the Sparrows have not yet learned how.

Suet is not expensive, so several racks, made of wire soap dishes, are kept filled with it all the time for all bird guests, Sparrows included.

When we placed the suet-racks on posts or trees, cats often climbed up and ate it; so now we drive down long pieces of old iron pipes and fasten the suet racks to these.

Since the birds are feeding at all hours of the day, it is a constant source of entertainment to watch them. We would not miss the pleasure for many times the cost. Besides we consider it profitable to attract the birds to our yard so that they will destroy the insect pests that would injure our fruit trees.

We kept one rack filled with suet last summer, and our Chickadees and Downies and a pair of Hairy Woodpeckers which had nested somewhere in the neighborhood, brought their babies to our yard as soon as they could fly, and fed them suet every day for a week or two. A pair of Catbirds also included suet in their children's diet.

It was very amusing to watch these little groups of bob-tailed youngsters waiting rather impatiently nearby, while the parent birds pecked off bits of suet and fed them in turn.—ETTA M. MORSE, *Woonsocket, S. Dak.*

### A Redstart Tragedy

In June, 1927, we discovered a Redstart's nest in the vine outside our library window. When we first saw it there were already young birds in the nest—there seemed to be just two, as we could see their heads only, one seeming a little larger than the other. One curious thing was that, at this time, there were two male Redstarts about. They flew around the bushes as if chasing each other and playing together.

The beautiful adult Redstart flew back and forth constantly with worms, and we were looking forward to the day when the young birds would leave the nest and we could watch them learning to fly.

On the early morning of June 18, one of the young birds was on the vine bough outside the nest. It stretched its wings and looked out upon the world, rather helplessly. I was away from home all day, and late in the afternoon when I looked at the nest there was only one bird in it and the other was nowhere to be seen.

The bird in the nest seemed to me to have an extraordinarily large head and beak, and

the horrible suspicion dawned upon me that the creature must be a young Cowbird. The two Redstarts, however, continued to feed it as devotedly as if it had been their own offspring.

On June 21, this ugly duckling, which was so much larger than its foster parents, left the nest and was sitting on the vine bough. Later in the day it had disappeared and I have not seen it again.

The sight of these lovely, fairy-like birds feeding so assiduously this ugly monster would have been comic—like the comedy of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'—only it was far too tragic for that.—ANNIE L. SEARS, *Waltham, Mass.*

### Friendly Kinglets

A year ago I became very much interested in the habits of the Ruby and Golden-crowned Kinglets. They were very numerous in some long lines of barberry bushes bordering a number of paths in our vegetable-garden. Both species, but especially the Golden-crowns, were very tame. They were busy hunting for insects and peering industriously into every cranny. There were several pairs of both species and one Palm Warbler (not bright enough to be the Yellow Palm, which is much commoner here) accompanied them.

On October 15, Golden-crowns became so tame that when I followed them quietly they allowed me to approach them and even to stroke them. Even when I patted and stroked their beautiful crest or parted their wings, they showed no fear. They even sat on my hands or lit on my coat. They were incredibly friendly. They remained for several days after that and then left the garden.

Finally I wish to add that on March 19 of this year I had the luck to observe a large male Pine Warbler. He sang a rather sweet though faint trill several times.—CYNTHIA CHURCH, *Great Neck, L. I.*

### Wrens and Bluebirds

As there has been much discussion recently as to the nest-robbing habit of the House

Wren, the following observations may be of interest.

We have about our home a number of one-room bird-houses of different sizes, suitable for Wrens, Bluebirds, Crested Flycatchers, and Flickers; and two Martin houses, each having ten rooms of standard dimensions.

Early in the season a pair of House Wrens built in a Flycatcher house, and at once filled a Bluebird house about fifty yards away with sticks. They raised a brood in spite of two attacks by black snakes (*Zamenis*), which, luckily, I saw in time to save the nestlings.

On July 27, they had a second brood in the gable room in the east end of a Martin house, 30 yards from the house in which the first brood was raised, and had filled one room on the north side of the house with sticks. This house had not been taken by Martins this season. At this date I noticed that a pair of Bluebirds were nesting in a room on the south side of the same house, evidently having very young nestlings, while the young Wrens were about two-thirds grown.

This situation was of great interest to me, as it is the first time I have known either species to nest in the same house with any other species, so I watched them quite closely, mornings and evenings, through the rest of their stay in the house.

Only twice did I see any signs of trouble between the two families, and in both cases the male Bluebird was the aggressor. He would make a dash at one of the Wrens, who would at once take refuge in their nest, when the Bluebird would go on about his business.

August 7, the young Wrens were out of the nest, though I cannot say just when they left, as I was away three days prior to that date. The young Bluebirds left the nest August 12.

I am sorry that other demands on my time made it impossible for me to keep closer watch on these two families.—JOHN B LEWIS, *Lawrenceville, Va.*

### Catbirds and Robins as Fish-Eaters

On a recent visit (June 28) to the Massachusetts State Fish Hatchery at Sutton, Mass., I was quite dumbfounded to observe Catbirds wading in shallow water and deftly



catching and swallowing trout fry about one and a half inches long.

Mr. Arthur Merrill, the superintendent of the hatchery, told me this habit was common among the several pairs of Catbirds and Robins that nested close by. Probably only a few individuals have actually learned the trick.

The Catbirds were extremely tame. I saw one seize a small trout in a swift, shallow

place, hop out with its prey wiggling in its bill, only to lose it a moment later. Not in the least discouraged, it went right at its fishing again and the second time, after considerable 'neck stretching,' succeeded in swallowing a most active fish.

Apparently the only birds which learn to fish in a hatchery, other than the regular fish-eaters, are Robins, Catbirds, and Crows.  
—JOHN C. PHILLIPS, *Wenham, Mass.*

## THE SEASON

Edited by J. T. NICHOLS

### LXIII. June 15 to August 15, 1927

The summer sun, having reached its greatest elevation in late June, has scarcely begun to slip back toward the Equator before various shore birds, appear, following our coast in their southward journey. They may have nested in the far north and find winter grounds in the Southern Hemisphere. Notable among these early transients is the big brown Hudsonian Curlew, which was this year present in unusually large numbers in the New York and particularly the Philadelphia region. On Long Island, where it may as a rule be looked for about July 4, a single individual reported passing June 26, establishes an early record. On the New Jersey shore it was first noticed July 3 and reached maximum numbers about the middle of the month. If we turn to the opposite seacoast, we find that the Hudsonian Curlew appeared in the Los Angeles, Calif., region July 7 and was common on the 14th; it was first seen in the San Francisco region July 9, and in largest numbers July 20 and August 1. Los Angeles observers appear to have a more favorable locality for Curlew than those about San Francisco, for in 1926 they found it on July 5, whereas it is not mentioned from the San Francisco region until August 7.

BOSTON REGION.—Today, August 17, the canoe birches and striped maples, the pines and the hemlocks at my camp in the White Mountains have been alive with the soft calls of Warblers and Vireos, Chickadees, Juncos

and Flycatchers, certain evidence that a migration wave is passing through. And over our blue lake the Swallows flit continually, all bound in the same direction, following a well-marked water route. Here and there a branch of tupelo or swamp maple is already brilliantly colored and our 'roadside gardens' are alight with goldenrod. In the woods today we picked up a tiny speck of scarlet, a moulted feather from the back of a Tanager. Surely summer wanes and autumn draws near.

The past two months have shown our usual New England versatility, but with the emphasis on cloudy and rainy weather. June was rainy and cool; July was more rainy but hot; there has been considerable rain in the first half of August. The farmers are discouraged over the lack of haying weather and we in summer camps have had our campcraft well tested, with rain at some time during every week. July in the mountains gave us some of the most disagreeable weather we have known in fifteen years—sticky, 'muggy' days followed by severe thunderstorms which, however, did not relieve the intense heat or the humidity, for several days at a time. August started with fine weather for the first week, but it has rained about every second day since then. The temperature has been decidedly lower than in July, however.

Probably the continued rainy weather affected the rearing of young of many kinds of birds. The torrential rains of July un-

doubtedly drowned out many nestlings, and the fly-catching fraternity had their troubles in finding adequate food. On the other hand, certain insect pests have had a very successful season, the gypsy moth alone having defoliated large areas which were free from its ravages in former years.

On July 15 broods of nearly grown Mergansers were following their mother on Lake Asquam in central New Hampshire, though as late as August 5 others were still unable to fly, 'hydroplaning' desperately across the lake in Indian file when pursued by our canoes. A lone adult was seen on Lake Winnepesaukee on August 5, apparently a male bird in eclipse plumage. This bird was able to fly but was in gray and brown plumage. Wood Ducks bred in our neighborhood for the first time in several years, and Herring Gulls were seen on Lake Winnepesaukee August 1, their nearest breeding place being the coast of Maine. Mr. Forbush reports them as increasing in numbers as summer residents of Massachusetts and they are reported as breeding in several new localities on the New England coast.

Late in July Black-crowned Night Herons are seen on the lakes of central New Hampshire where I have never observed adults. Returns of banded Herons from Barnstable indicate that these may be Massachusetts birds wandering to the northward. Great Blue Herons breed in a small rookery on Asquam Lake, and are occasionally seen lighting in deep water to pick up food. The shores of lakes Asquam and Winnepesaukee are rocky and trees and bushes hang down over the water with very few beaches except in front of summer cottages. There are also very few swamp areas where these Herons can feed, so that they may have developed this deep-water feeding habit because of the shore conditions. At any rate, I have seen these birds alight in water fifty feet deep, close their wings and rest for an appreciable interval, then rise easily and fly away with some article of food dangling from their bills. I have seen this for several different years and as many as seven times in one season, at points twenty miles apart.

Duck Hawks have bred for many years on Hawk Ledge not far from my summer loca-

tion, and the young birds were ready to fly July 18. Their cries could be heard plainly as we paddled down the river past their towering cliff, and the nest, though inaccessible, was easily located. Broadwings and Red-shoulders, with a few Cooper's, are the only other Hawks noted. Bald Eagles still breed about Lake Winnepesaukee and both adult and dark birds are frequently seen. Barred Owls have been less in evidence than usual this summer, their characteristic call having been only occasionally noted. A small Owl was reported by one of my sons from the spruce-belt near the top of Kinsman Mountain, from his description apparently a Saw-whet. I have only one record of a Screech Owl for this locality (central and northern New Hampshire) in fifteen years. A Pileated Woodpecker visited our camp on July 17, a Sapsucker was seen the 19th, and Downies and Hairies are common. Wood Pewees are still calling in our woods, and Phoebe raised several broods about our buildings. Cuckoos are much more abundant in the neighborhood than fifteen years ago, and for two years a Blackbill has nested in a sapling white pine beside the path at our boys' camp, making an exceptionally firm and well-built nest. Perhaps the influx of gypsy moths accounts for the increase in Cuckoos, but it does not account for the apparent abundance of Kingfishers.

The most noticeable feature in the smaller land birds is the marked abundance of Redstarts and the comparative lack of our usual northern Warblers. Very few Parulas, Blackburnians, Black-throated Greens and Black-throated Blues have been seen in our woods in comparison with other years, and Ovenbirds, ordinarily so noisy as to be a nuisance when listening for other birds, have been much less common. Redstarts were also noticeably abundant at my home in Cohasset, Massachusetts, in June, before we left for the mountains.

Barn Swallows were seen in migration the last of July and first of August, though young were still in the nest at Rangeley Lake, Maine, August 14. These birds, with other day migrants, furnish an interesting key to the migration routes. Little Asquam, where my camps are located, is a small lake about



two miles long, extending east and west, its outlet a small river which flows southwest to the Pemigewasset River, the course of the latter being almost due south. Big Asquam, roughly triangular in shape, with the apex reaching up towards the mountains, lies northeast of us. In different years I have noted day migrations of Hawks, Nighthawks, Hummingbirds, and various Swallows through this region. They apparently come down the mountain valleys from "North of Bearcamp Water," fly southwest the length of Big Asquam, swing due west down Little Asquam, then swing southwest along the Ashland River to the Pemigewasset. From there the Pemigewasset and Merrimac Rivers would lead almost straight south to the Massachusetts line. Nighthawks have been observed flying due east along Little Asquam in the northward migration in May.

Swallows have also been noted several seasons migrating southwest across Lake Winnepesaukee, paralleling their course on the Asquams, and headed towards the Winnepesaukee River which flows into the Merrimac. This is especially interesting to me in that geologists say the outlet of the lake in pre-glacial times was from Alton Bay to the southeast, instead of southwest through Weirs and Laconia as at present.

Partly fledged Juncoes were being fed in the nest on Kinsman Mountain August 5 while young Winter Wrens were barely able to fly among the stunted spruces above Lonesome Lake. Golden-crowned Kinglets and Brown Creepers appeared among the hardwoods at an altitude of 500 feet about this date, showing a downward if not a southward movement to have begun. And it is time now to look for the new arrivals of Canada and Wilson's Warblers, Olive-backed Thrushes, and other birds which, while breeding not far away, do not summer among our camp woods on Lake Asquam.—JOHN B. MAY, M.D., *Camp Winnetaska, Ashland, N. H.*

NEW YORK REGION.—Although as usual with variable weather, on the whole these two months of summer were cool and wet. In mid-June the Linnæan Society made a coöperative investigation of the north shore

of Long Island, listing both the Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Warbling Vireo, thus corroborating these species as rare summer residents for that section, which appear to be absent elsewhere on the island. The Louisiana Waterthrush was present in greater numbers; and of particular interest is the Veery, located by Mrs. G. G. Fry at Glen Cove, June 29, in song (in a piece of damp woodland, of oak, maple, birch and beech). There has been some doubt about the status of this species as a Long Island nesting bird, for in recent years, at least, it has apparently been rare and local, confined to the northwest section if not to the immediate vicinity of Hempstead Harbor.

Definite evidence has come to hand of the breeding of the Short-billed Marsh Wren on the south shore of Long Island at Mastic. On July 16, the writer in company with F. E. Watson was watching decoys set out for passing shore birds, when Watson, who is very familiar with it, detected the song of this species coming from a fresh-water bog behind us adjacent to the salt marsh. On investigation, excellent views of the singer were obtained on an exposed perch, perhaps 300 yards from where its song had been detected, and another individual, presumably a female was flushed from the shortish grass of the bog. The Wren sang very persistently on this and the succeeding day, and the species was also heard singing near the same spot on August 6.

Local nesting dates for the Woodcock have so wide a range as to suggest that this species may sometimes rear a second brood. R. Boulton reports two 'singing' at Cold Spring Harbor, L. I., on June 12, where young birds able to fly had been observed June 6 (O. Riddle). Any time in June must be exceptionally late for the Woodcock's crepuscular sky performance, though it is not infrequent in the last few days of May.

LeRoy Wilcox writes that at Speonk, L. I., Black-crowned Night Heron colony contained about 400 pairs this season, and that such a colony located at Orient contained 700 or 800 pairs. Heron visitants from the South seem to have been present on Long Island in about normal numbers, although not much definite data in regard to them has

come in as yet. However, an American Egret near East Moriches, July 1 (Miss K. Fuertes and E. Loomis) is an exceptionally early date for that species; and birds carefully studied about July 17 and later at Southold, and reported in detail to the Department of Birds of the American Museum of Natural History by Mrs. W. F. Atkinson, can only have been the rare Yellow-crowned Night Heron; there were four of them when first observed. A single Black Skimmer flying west was observed at Gilgo, L. I., August 11 (F. E. Watson).

A Summer Tanager in the Bronx Botanical Gardens June 12 (C. Johnston) is interesting, not only for its rarity but from the late date. Apparently the Double-crested Cormorant was present on Long Island throughout the summer. On July 9 a Cormorant which got up at long range from the waters of Moriches Bay and flew eastward (J. T. Nichols) seems to have been a straggler from the northward migration which normally extends well through June, whereas two birds together, definitely Double-crested, at the same locality July 17, may have been south-bound, as a flock of four Scaup flying strongly low over the bay skirting the edge of the salt marsh appeared to be (F. E. Watson, W. F. and J. T. Nichols).

In July and August the attention of the field student, if he is fortunate enough to be near the coast, turns from summering birds to the southward flight of shore birds which reaches its height in the latter month. The present season these species have been abundant, doubtless correlated with the heavy rains, which make a larger area available for them, though certain spots may be less favorable than when it is drier. Unusually large numbers of Hudsonian Curlew passing through were, however, probably dependent on other than this local condition. The earliest date for Long Island, a single bird flying west at Mount Sinai, June 26 (R. C. Murphy), is notable. The most notable shore-bird record is perhaps a Long-billed Curlew observed at Quogue, July 10 (F. E. Watson). A Solitary Sandpiper at Dyker Heights, Brooklyn, July 6 (P. A. Du Mont), is very early.

The most interesting data sent in by the

Bronx County Bird Club is evidence of the Common Loon breeding on Croton Lake, Westchester County. It was assumed that an individual there June 10 was a late migrant; but on July 31 there were no less than four birds near where this one was observed, two adults in full plumage, the other two immatures. The coincidence of numbers, plumages and very early date is at least suggestive. On July 23, a Cormorant was observed flying east to west along Long Island Sound, apparently in regular migration. This Cormorant date compares with one for Mastic, L. I., mentioned above, at which latter locality also a single early migrant Loon was observed flying strongly at fair height in a southwesterly direction, cutting across the outer beach on August 13 (J. T. Nichols).

Tree Swallows and a few other transient land birds are on the wing in the latter part of this period. As these may be of species which also nest locally in the New York Region, there is some uncertainty as to the status of the first individuals. It is, however, worth noting that at Garden City, L. I., the flight-call *pink* of the Bobolink was heard on July 13, and there was a Black and White Warbler in song on August 12 (J. T. Nichols), neither species, so far as known, having nested anywhere nearby. A single Canadian Warbler and Northern Water-Thrush, August 6, and a Hooded Warbler, August 10, are reported as transients from near Passaic, N. J. (R. Clausen).

The small number of species which still breed in Central Park, New York City, often give data from there a certain special interest as indicative of movement. Hence, it is worth while to record a Mourning Dove, July 26 (P. A. Du Mont), and a Kingfisher seen from the writer's window overlooking the Park, July 21 (T. Barbour).—J. T. NICHOLS, *New York, N. Y.*

PHILADELPHIA REGION.—Weather conditions averaged about normal. Heavy thunder showers occurred during the first week in August; a local 'twister' during one of these storms on August 8, unroofed houses, uprooted trees, and caused considerable damage near Berlin, N. J. Little wind accompanied



this downpour at Collingswood. During the height of this storm, a flock of Robins was observed flying to their roost nearby.

Upland Plover were heard passing over on July 19, and again on July 31, at Collingswood, N. J. Few summer Woodcock records have been reported. Mr. Carey found one, dead, at Mt. Pocono, Pa., July 24. A Golden-winged Warbler was observed on August 4 at Philadelphia by Mr. Yoder.

Southbound shore-birds have attracted the most attention among observers. Hudsonian Curlew have passed down the New Jersey coast in most unusual numbers. Mr. Urner, writing from Barnegat Bay, states that he observed a few on July 3. The flight steadily increased up to the middle of the month when the greatest number passed. He estimated from various sources that at least 5,000 Curlew passed through from July 15 to July 19 inclusive. With the Curlew were a few Hudsonian Godwits. Two were recognized by Mr. Urner on July 17.

Mr. Marburger and others saw about 100 Curlew flying due southeast out to sea at Stone Harbor, July 24. Flock of 50 was also seen at this point on August 7, indicating that the southward movement of these birds was by no means over on that date.

A shore-bird census was taken by Messrs. Marburger, Yoder and the writer on August 7, covering likely points near Brigantine, Sea Isle City, and Stone Harbor, N. J., resulting as follows: Dowitcher, 60; Stilt Sandpiper, 19; Knot, 35; Pectoral Sandpiper, 10; Least Sandpiper, 20; Semipalmated Sandpiper, 350; Sanderling, 160; Greater Yellowlegs, 10; Yellow-legs, 250; Willet, 4; Spotted Sandpiper, 18; Hudsonian Curlew, 75; Black-bellied Plover, 5; Killdeer, 2; Semipalmated Plover, 150; Piping Plover, 6; Turnstone, 31.

One group of Stilt Sandpipers were wading and at times floating about in a rather deep pool, tipping up like Ducks in order to reach bottom for food. Two Dowitchers in the same pool were acting in the same manner, while two Yellow-legs picked their food from the surface of the water near the edge of the pool.

The list of Warren Eaton and Charles Urner at Brigantine and Absecon Inlet on the same date is interesting by comparison.

Dowitcher, 125; Stilt Sandpiper, 17; Knot, 10; Pectoral Sandpiper, 3; White-rumped Sandpiper, 2; Baird's Sandpiper, 1; Least Sandpiper, 6; Semipalmated Sandpiper, 500 (1 albino); Sanderling, 50; Greater Yellowlegs, 25; Yellow-legs, 150; Willet, 4; Spotted Sandpiper, 15; Hudsonian Curlew, 52; Black-bellied Plover, 20; Killdeer, 1; Semipalmated Plover, 50; Piping Plover, 6; Turnstone, 10.

The more southern of the New Jersey Common Tern and Black Skimmer colonies have fared rather badly this summer, the Grassy Sound nesting island having been swept repeatedly by tides, preventing the birds from nesting. A large number of Terns and a few Skimmers attempted to nest on the lower end of Seven-Mile Beach. The Skimmers soon gave up and left. The Terns continued with some success in spite of constant human interference. Mr. Urner states that the Barnegat Bay Skimmer colony has increased from a few pairs to about sixty birds.

Least Terns have had a fairly successful season along the south Jersey coast. The largest colony known to the writer contains thirty to forty adults. Here on July 17 several young were observed in various stages of growth.

Piping Plover have been fairly numerous at various New Jersey coast points, eighteen being noted on July 24. An adult with two young just able to fly was found at Ocean City on July 17.

Other records of interest are: Flock of Blue-winged Teal, July 20 (O. Ayres); Sooty Shearwater, July 10; Parasitic Jaeger, 6, July 23-24; Forster's Tern, July 30 (C. Urner); Caspian Tern, July 22 (S. Urner), all at Barnegat Bay, N. J. Flock of 50 Black Ducks, July 4 and 5; singing Savannah Sparrows, July 5, at Cape May, N. J. (Potter); Stilt Sandpiper (adult plumage), July 31, at Two-Mile Beach, N. J. (Gillespie); Olive-sided Flycatcher, near Lancaster, Pa., June 9 (Marburger); Raven, New Egypt, N. J., June (Urner).

Sometimes 'improvements' are a real boon to bird students. A new highway leading out of Camden, N. J., bisects a cattail marsh on the outskirts of the city and prevents a normal drainage. Duckweed has appeared, quickly making ideal conditions for certain

marsh birds. On July 31, an adult Gallinule with two downy young was seen, also an almost fully developed youngster. On August 10, several Green Herons and Florida Gallinules, one Egret and numbers of Night Herons were observed. A King Rail (?) was heard.—JULIAN K. POTTER, *Collingswood, N. J.*

WASHINGTON (D. C.) REGION.—The cool weather of June and July, 1927, may have had an influence on water-birds about Washington. Whether this be so or not, the fact remains that a number of unusual occurrences were noted. Some of these interesting happenings took place during the bird trips made by the young folks of the National gathering of the 4-H Agricultural Clubs, which was held in Washington from June 17 to June 23. Most of these trips were to the Arlington Beach Marsh where, on June 17, a female Pintail was seen flying out of the marsh and on June 23, a pair of Pintails was seen at the same place. We have not, however, been able actually to determine whether or not these birds were breeding. The species has never previously been seen in the vicinity of Washington later than May 2 (1920). At the edge of the marsh, on July 20, a King Rail was seen running across the road. This species was probably breeding in this place.

So far as the previous records show there seldom if ever have been so many Ducks remaining on the Potomac River as has been the case this year, and practically all of the birds seen furnish interesting records.

On June 28, fifty Canvasbacks were seen near Alexandria, four at Mount Vernon, and four at Fort Washington, all on the Potomac River. These birds were noted by several observers. On July 6, twenty-two were seen at Broad Creek, one at Mount Vernon, and a number off Four-Mile Run; on July 12 eleven were noted in the last-mentioned locality and twenty-five at Broad Creek; all these latter records by W. H. Ball.

Thirty Lesser Scaups were noted on June 28 by several observers near Alexandria. On July 6, Mr. Ball saw a number opposite Four-Mile Run and four at Mount Vernon, while on July 12 he noted five at Alexander Island, Virginia.

Seven individuals of the Black Duck were seen on June 28 by several observers near Alexandria; one on July 6 at Four-Mile Run; and twenty on July 12 at the same place both by W. H. Ball.

A single Ruddy Duck was noted by Mr. Ball opposite Alexandria on June 28.

Other notable or otherwise interesting water-bird records were also obtained during this period. Herons and Egrets appeared early. The American Egret was noted on June 21, opposite Alexandria, by Mr. Ball; on June 28, sixteen were seen by him in the same locality, and at various localities thereafter. Three adult Little Blue Herons were seen by him on July 12, opposite Alexandria; and thirty, including both adult and young, at Alexander Island near Gravelly Point on July 17. Thirty Great Blue Herons were seen near Alexandria on July 6, and thirty-six on July 12, together with eleven others on the Potomac River north of Mount Vernon. Five Least Bitterns were seen at Alexander Island on July 4, and four on the same date at the Arlington Beach Marsh, all of these by the same observer. The Yellow-crowned Night Heron appeared again this year on July 4, when a single individual was seen by Mr. Ball, at Alexander Island. He noted it again on July 11, and on July 17 he saw two in the same marsh. A single Louisiana Heron was reported by him on July 17 in the same locality.

Four Caspian Terns were seen by several individuals on the Potomac River near Alexandria on June 28, which constitutes the only summer record for the District of Columbia. A Black Tern was seen by Mr. and Mrs. L. D. Miner near Fort Foote, on the Potomac River, on June 28. This is the only summer record, since August and May are the nearest dates on which the species has been observed in this region. Two Least Terns and two Common Terns were reported by Mr. Ball at Chesapeake Beach on July 18.

One Double-crested Cormorant was seen by several observers at Mount Vernon on June 28, and another at Fort Hunt on the same day; Mr. Ball reported one of these at Fort Hunt on July 6 and also on July 12. The two former at the only June records for the District of Columbia.



The same observer reported the Florida Gallinule on July 4 at Arlington Beach and also at Alexander Island on the same day, and saw three at the latter locality on July 17. Apparently the species is still a regular summer resident in this locality.

A Least Sandpiper was seen on Alexander Island by Mr. Ball on July 17, which is the earliest fall migrant record for the region, the previously earliest being August 10, 1914; likewise, the Lesser Yellowlegs seen also by him at the same place on the same day, antedates the previously earliest autumn record of August 21, 1894, by more than a month.

The Purple Martins are again occupying their roost on New Jersey Avenue, having returned to it during the latter part of June, though at that time in small numbers.—HARRY C. OBERHOLSER, *Biological Survey, Washington, D. C.*

PENSACOLA (FLORIDA) REGION.—Although no excessively hot spells have been experienced, the temperature for the whole period has averaged a bit above normal. June gave us 100 per cent more rainfall than the normal for that month, but the deficiency in July and August has brought the total precipitation for the period about back to normal.

Before taking up the subject of migration, it is necessary to consider the unusually large number of species that have been represented by non-breeders in this region this summer. In fact, in some cases, the presence of undoubted non-breeders has overlapped true migration to such an extent as to have obscured the records. The Black Tern is known to summer in the Gulf in small numbers, but this year the species has been positively common. Large numbers of birds in immature plumage, reported in the preceding period, have been present all summer, and occasionally adult birds were seen among them. It was not until the adults became common late in July that I could be certain that true migration was in progress. Other species, seen far in advance of normal migration dates, include: Lesser Yellow-legs, June 26; Black-bellied Plover (immature plumage) and Sanderling, June 26 and July 9; Ring-billed Gull (immature), Red-backed Sandpiper (adult), and Semipalmated Plover,

July 9; and Red-breasted Merganser (female or immature), August 7. About twenty Semipalmated Sandpipers, seen on July 9, may have been unusually early migrants.

True migratory movement in this period is almost wholly confined to the shore birds, and this year has proved no exception. Arrivals of interest include: Pectoral Sandpiper, Lesser Yellowlegs, and Solitary Sandpiper, first seen on July 26; Black and White Warbler, July 30 (earliest ever recorded); Dowitcher, Piping Plover (very rare), and Ruddy Turnstone (a day earlier than my previous earliest record), July 31; Spotted Sandpiper, Semipalmated Plover, and Barn Swallow, August 7; and Redstart, August 13. The only Piping Plover seen was a fine example of the full-collared form, once separated under the name *circumcincta*. Two Turnstones seen on July 31 and another on August 7 were the only adults I have ever seen in this region. On July 27, six Killdeer were seen, a month earlier than I had ever before recorded them. On the night of July 23, there was a heavy migration of Night Herons—probably the Yellow-crowned—traveling in a southwesterly direction over the city.

Of departing migrants, there are two species that always leave during this period: Mississippi Kite, last seen on July 31; and Orchard Oriole, August 4.

Although the peak of nesting activity was past before the opening of the present period, many notes of interest were made. On June 26, a visit to two colonies of Least Terns showed 29 nests still containing eggs. Of these, 24 nests contained 2 eggs each, 4 contained 1 each, and 1 had 3 eggs. Many young birds of all ages were seen, and undoubtedly far more escaped observation. Two very active downy young of the Cuban Snowy Plover were seen on June 26, and a set of 3 heavily incubated eggs (my second in this region) was found on July 9. A visit to the Little Blue Heron colony on July 29 yielded a census of 5 young birds that could not yet fly freely, 20 others in white or mixed blue and white plumage, and 40 adults—the great majority of adults and birds of the year had wandered away several weeks previously. An interesting addition to the colony was the

repeated presence of two White Ibises, in what I took to be the plumage of year-old birds. It is almost certain that they had nested among the Herons, adding another item to my local list of breeding species. Other notes of interest include: Black Skimmer, nest with 4 fresh eggs found on June 26; Sharp-shinned Hawk, my second summer record in eleven years, probably nesting; Yellow-breasted Chat (very rare) in full song and probably nesting, July 3; and Red-headed Woodpecker, young birds still in the nest, August 3. To me, the outstanding occurrence of the whole period was the discovery, on August 7, of the Gray Kingbird, a species of peninsular Florida seldom if ever before recorded from this far west. Four birds were seen in a scrubby growth of pine and live oak near the beach, and two of these were very evidently but a few days out of the nest and had certainly been reared not far away.

The volume of bird-song waned rapidly in the early part of the period, and, except for the Carolina Wren, which knows no closed season on song, no singers can be heard regularly at the end of the period. In fact, my journal shows a cessation of song earlier this year than usual. The song of the Prothonotary Warbler was last heard on July 3; Orchard Oriole, July 7; Chuckwill's-widow, Southern Meadowlark, Towhee, and Southern Yellow-throat, July 10; Bachman's Sparrow, Cardinal, Red-eyed Vireo, Pine Warbler, Tufted Titmouse, and Carolina Chickadee, July 24; Bobwhite, July 29; and White-eyed Vireo, August 14. The Mockingbird, to my great surprise, is still occasionally heard, but the tone quality of his music is that of the fall song rather than of spring—a very different, though still pleasing, performance characterized by a lack of the ringing tones of spring and comprising little or no imitation of the notes of other singers.

Items of general interest include: an unusual number of Bachman's Sparrows, normally a rare species, seen and heard on June 19; first flocking of Florida Grackles, July 2; unusual number of Cuban Snowy Plovers throughout the period, with positive abundance on July 9; the occurrence of an American Egret, a rare species here, on July 10; and a Frigate Bird, that peerless aviator from

the tropics, on July 31.—FRANCIS M. WESTON, *United States Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Fla.*

OBERLIN (OHIO) REGION.—In many respects this summer has been a normal one as far as weather conditions are concerned. There has been a moderate amount of rain, the temperature has remained, on the average, at a favorable degree, and there have been many clear days. Three exceptionally warm periods, however, interrupted this general moderateness, the first between June 28 and July 2, the second between July 12 and 14, and the third between July 27 and 29. On five different occasions during these periods the thermometer registered over 90 degrees, and on the 13th the climax of the summer was reached at 94 degrees. Cooler weather has thus far marked August, especially the nights. On the morning of the 11th, a reading of 46 degrees was obtained.

From all indications, this summer has been a successful one for bird nesting. There has been the usual large number of nests destroyed by enemies as one may always expect. The red squirrel has seemed unusually abundant, but, on the contrary, the black snakes have been poorly represented so that the actual number of enemies with which the birds have had to contend has probably been the same. The weather conditions have not been unfavorable.

The abundance of Robins in this region has for some time received considerable unfavorable comment. This appears to be especially warranted this year. If the number of nests found within the fifteen acres of the Baldwin Bird Research Laboratory at Gates Mills be any index of the general condition in the region, then there has been a decided increase. Where but twenty-five nests were listed in 1925 and thirty in 1926, thirty-eight have been registered during this last summer. Each year, however, a large number of nestings are never completed because of some mishap or tragedy.

The House Wren, which was noted in this report for last year as being unusually scarce in northern Ohio, has again regained approximately its normal numbers. Strangely enough, however, we have no banding return

record of this species which dates back previous to 1926, but perhaps this is not of great significance since no return record for the previous year was earlier than 1925.

The apparent eastward invasion of the Dickcissel which has been noted in these reports during the last couple of years, received further confirmation this year. In the northwestern part of the state they have been represented as being actually common. C. T. Robertson reports having found them during the middle of July in Hocking County.

Since the northwestern part of this state, particularly around Toledo, has not been very well known to many ornithological students living outside the region, the following records of Mr. Louis Campbell may be of considerable interest.

A colony of about fifty Black-crowned Night Herons were found at Toledo Beach, first on May 1, and as they were noted nesting there last year, the colony is probably more or less permanently established. Although we do not know of any colony of this species which has been found in the Marblehead region, the finding of birds regularly during the middle and latter part of May in that vicinity indicates the probability of there being one.

In regard to the Veery and the Warblers of the region, Mr. Campbell writes: "About every patch of wet woods in this district contains one or two pairs of Veeries which are very rare elsewhere. Here, too, one finds the Warblers nesting. This year I have found the Maryland Yellow-throat, Oven-bird, Redstart, and Yellow Warbler in numbers, quite a few pairs of Golden-wings and Chats and Ceruleans, and one pair each of Black and Whites and Blue-winged Warblers." He also tells of a pair of Mockingbirds which nested just over the Michigan line in 1924 and 1925, and were not noted in 1926, but the male was seen again this summer.

Savannah Sparrows he has found quite frequently in all directions from Toledo this summer, apparently nesting. Hitherto this species has been considered very rare as a summer resident, but careful search over the state might reveal the fact that it is more common and generally distributed than has been suspected.

On July 10, Mr. Campbell, together with Mr. Neven Winter, were fortunate in locating a small colony of Short-billed Marsh Wrens. Five birds were seen, apparently four males, and a female which circled around scolding as if she had a nest nearby. Later in the summer two more colonies were found not far away. These records, together with another which has been reported from Lorain County, are remarkable, considering the supposed scarcity of the species.

The following Sandpiper records for the Marblehead and Toledo regions indicate considerable fall movement already at hand in these species: July 6, Lesser Yellow-legs, Least Sandpiper; July 17, Dowitcher (15 individuals near Port Clinton), Pectoral Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper; July 19, Semipalmated Plover; Aug. 3, Baird's Sandpiper; Aug. 14, Greater Yellow-legs and Sanderling.—S. CHARLES KENDEIGH, *Oberlin, Ohio*.

CHICAGO REGION.—Perhaps the most unexpected occurrence of the past season was the finding of a hen Ruddy Duck with her brood of half-grown young at Lake Calumet. A number of other ducks that are seldom seen here in summer were found, among them being the Shoveller, Lesser Scaup, and Ring-necked Duck. Mallards, Black Ducks, and Blue-winged Teal had begun flocking by August 6, though the last species is still chiefly found in family groups. Two Black Ducks were also seen on August 2 by Mrs. Baldwin. Mr. Conover reports that one set of eggs of the Teal had just hatched on July 24, the first laying having probably been destroyed.

The scarcity of shore birds during the past spring was more than made up for this summer. Both Yellow-legs and 'Peeps,' Sanderlings, Semipalmated Plovers, and Pectoral and Solitary Sandpipers have all been common. It is pleasing to note that both the Piping and Upland Plovers seem to be on the increase in this vicinity; at least they are more often reported now than they were a few years ago. The following shore birds have been noted once or twice during the past two months: Dowitcher, August 6; Baird's Sandpiper, August 14; Red-backed



Sandpiper, August 3 and 14; and Golden Plover, July 17. A single Lark Sparrow and Duck Hawk were seen at Beach on July 9 and August 6, respectively.

Mockingbirds, Migrant Shrikes, and Tufted Tits were found by Mr. Burge to be quite common this July near Crete, Ill., a short distance south of Chicago. Because of the few species and individuals which the writer saw this summer in southern Illinois, he is led to believe that the influx of southern birds noticed this spring and summer near Chicago was due to the flooded condition of the lower portion of the state. During the spring and summer of 1875, a time of unusually high water in southern Illinois, a similar abundance of southern species was found at Chicago.

To date, no returning Warblers have been reported, though a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher found at Beach on August 6 may have been an early migrant. It may be well to note that the Yellow Warbler has only occasionally been seen this summer. This bird is becoming strangely uncommon as a breeder in northeastern Illinois.—PIERCE BRODKORB, *Evanston, Illinois*.

MINNESOTA REGION.—Moderate summer weather, inclining however to cooler than usual, has prevailed in Minnesota this summer. There have been no long hot spells. The park bathing beaches at Minneapolis could not open until June 19 as the water did not become warm enough until that date. The last three days of June were very warm with maximum temperatures in the southern part of the state between 90 degrees and 100 degrees—94 degrees at Minneapolis on the 29th and 96 degrees at Montevideo on the 30th. There has been no really hot weather since that time except on two days, July 26 and 27, when the mercury rose to 90 degrees at Minneapolis. On July 6 a cold drizzling rain at Duluth was accompanied by a brief freak snow flurry at noon. On the nights of August 7 and 8 there were light frosts in northwestern Minnesota and North Dakota at the same time that the temperature in adjoining portions of Canada fell several degrees below freezing. There have been many clear and partly clear days and rain has

fallen at Minneapolis on only 10 days, not enough to meet the needs of vegetation. Several severe storms, largely local, have occurred in various parts of the state, reaching at times tornado violence. Most of the lakes and streams continued to rise until near the middle of July, especially in the northern part of the state, but since that time have been falling rather rapidly. It is stated that Lake Superior at the highest point was nearly two feet above the level of last year, an immense amount of water coming largely from the melting of the heavy snows of last winter. Vegetation has been luxuriant and heavy this year, due to the excessive early moisture. There has been an abundant berry crop, both wild and cultivated, and farms and orchards have yielded above the average.

From June 8 to 18 Mr. Kilgore and Mr. Breckenridge were in Isanti County, about 45 miles north of Minneapolis, and the writer was with them part of the time. This locality is of special interest as it is on the extreme southern edge of the Canadian Zone and here there is a mingling of *Transition* and *Canadian* birds and plants and, strange to say, a small isolated colony of Prothonotary Warblers, separated many miles from the Mississippi Valley birds. The chief object of the trip was to look for the nest of the Connecticut Warbler which had been found living in the spruce and tamarack swamps some years ago. We were disappointed in not finding even the bird, due perhaps to the flooded condition of all the lowlands. The Hermit Thrush was also absent, though it formerly dwelt in the pine groves in the northern part of the county.

On June 9, the following plants were found in bloom in one of the typical Canadian spruce swamps: twin-flower, clintonia, Labrador tea, round-leaved orchis, the small and large yellow and the stemless lady's-slipper and the rare ram's-head lady's-slipper. Prairie Chickens were not uncommon and were 'booming' until the end of our stay, which seemed late. Ruffed Grouse also were 'drumming.' Several broods were met with and as late as the 17th a covey of quite small young was flushed, which alighted in the trees nearby and assumed the 'freezing attitude' of the adults. A pair of Green-

winged Teal, seen on the 11th, was a surprise as this Duck is rarely found in Minnesota nowadays in the breeding season. On the 13th, a Marsh Hawk's eggs were just hatching, and on the 16th, a Cooper's Hawk's nest contained eggs and newly hatched young. *Within twelve feet* of the Marsh Hawk's nest was a nest of the Maryland Yellow-throat containing five fresh eggs. On the 9th, young Purple Finches, out of the nest, were being fed by the female. The Scarlet Tanager was common, nesting here in the tamaracks; the first nest found was on the 9th, with four fresh eggs. A Prothonotary Warbler's nest on the 10th contained fresh eggs. Pine Warblers were still building on the 11th and 12th. Two Veery nests on the 9th contained fresh eggs. The most interesting find of the trip was a nest of the Golden-crowned Kinglet, which the birds were just building on the 18th in the dense top of a slender spruce about thirty-five feet from the ground. The nest was completed except a little of the lining. One hundred species were noted during our stay and on one day the list was sixty-five but we felt that on the whole birds were not so numerous as they should have been. A few species usually common were almost entirely absent, as the Towhee, the Cuckoo, Swamp Sparrow, and Lark Sparrow. A pair of Upland Plover nested this year just north of East Minneapolis, a rather sad reminder of the hundreds that once dwelt in the same locality. On July 2 to 4 Mr. Breckenridge was on the St. Croix River below Taylor's Falls and found the Louisiana Water-thrush feeding young on the 3rd, and young Rough-winged Swallows being fed on the 4th. On July 5, not far from Minneapolis, Mr. Breckenridge found a Crested Flycatcher's nest containing young nearly full grown; a Spotted Sandpiper's nest with four fresh eggs; young Flickers and House Wrens just out of the nest; and well-grown but still downy Broad-winged Hawks in the nest. On the 6th, young Tree Swallows in the nest. On the 8th a Bluebird's nest, one egg. On the 9th, the young Crested Flycatchers were able to fly a short distance and were being fed large dragon-flies and monarch or viceroy butterflies without removing the wings—troublesome morsels one would think.

Mrs. F. S. Davidson kindly furnishes the following Hennepin County notes: Least Bitterns have been unusually numerous this summer. A Cerulean Warbler was seen on August 2; Hooded Merganser, July 13; Ring-necked Duck, July 31; Wilson's Phalarope, August 8 (no record of their nesting here this year); a Long-billed Dowitcher, still in breeding plumage, August 3; first returning Pectoral Sandpipers, August 3, common, August 8; Least Sandpiper, July 8, common, August 8; Red-backed Sandpiper, August 12; Semipalmated Sandpiper, July 23, common, August 12; Lesser Yellow-legs, July 8, common, August 8; Solitary Sandpiper, July 8; Stilt Sandpiper, August 8, common August 12; Semipalmated Plover, August 12; and a single Marbled Godwit August 8, a rare bird here now. Red-winged, Yellow-headed, and Brewer's Blackbirds and Cowbirds were flocking July 13, and Tree and Bank Swallows, July 29. On July 29th, a pair of Wood Ducks with young nearly grown was seen at Long Meadow Slough, the male in imperfect eclipse plumage making one of the party, which seemed unusual. At the same place on August 8th, a gathering of eighty-two Blue-winged Teal, mostly young, were feeding together and almost as tame as domestic Ducks. The writer saw them at the same spot a few days later. Some of the young were not fully grown but all could fly, though reluctantly. There was not a white-faced bird among them and, with the blue of the wing entirely concealed, they were a somber, inconspicuous-looking lot, the general mud-brown appearance being relieved only now and then when one of the birds lifted a wing and flashed out the pretty blue epaulet. More than the usual number of Ducks in recent years seem to have bred along the Minnesota River in Hennepin County this summer.

Mr. Gustav Swanson, of Minneapolis, sends the following additional notes: July 15, a flock of 175 Swallows, one-half Bank and the rest Rough-winged, Tree, and Barn Swallows; a Kingbird's nest with young; Barn Swallow's nest, three eggs; Redstart's nests, one with eggs and one with newly hatched young; Catbird's nest with young a day old; and Long-billed Wren's nest, one

egg; 17th, one Pectoral Sandpiper; 30th, downy young of Spotted Sandpiper; August 11, four Greater Yellow-legs; 13th, Goldfinch's nest, five eggs. July 2-5, at Brainerd, young Loons about half grown. Mr. Swanson also contributes the following observations by Charles Evans at Gull Lake near Brainerd: July 20, Olive-sided Flycatcher feeding young out of nest; 23d, Cedar Waxwing's nest with five eggs, young still in nest August 14; 28th, Goldfinch's nest, five eggs, three of which hatched and the young left nest on August 14.

The following Minneapolis notes may be of interest: June 21, syringa in bloom; 29th, Meadowlark's nest, five fresh eggs. July 2, white water-lilies in bloom; 3d, catalpa trees in full bloom; 9th, first wild asters in bloom; 10th, many sunfish guarding their pebbly nests in shallow water along the shore of a small lake; 15th, brood of Blue Jays just out of nest near center of city, Yellow Warbler's nest with young just ready to fly, swamp milkweed in bloom; 26th, bergamot, butterfly-weed, drooping coneflower (*Lepachys*), and lead plant in bloom; 28th, young Chip-ping Sparrows just out of nest.

Miss Margaret Wentling reports a nest of the Black-throated Green Warbler at Itasca Park which the young birds left July 13, nine days after hatching. While the nest still contained eggs, a storm turned it almost up on edge. Miss Wentling replaced it, bound it fast with a strip of old canvas, and the birds accepted the service in good part and continued to the end.

A Bluebird's nest with eggs found on July 10 was most unusually situated. I have been unable to find any record of this bird nesting anywhere except in a cavity of some sort. This nest was among the flowering plants in a cemetery urn. It was well and rather heavily built of grass, sunk to some extent in the earth, and with its blue eggs suggested the nest of a Veery. The plants were thick and arched over the nest and the bird came and went through an opening on the level of the rim of the urn. May not this be a rare case of reversion to an ancient nesting habit, for most of the Thrushes nest in the open and only the Bluebirds and one or two Old World groups have departed from the conventional

family way?—THOS. S. ROBERTS, M.D., *Zoological Museum, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minn.*

DENVER REGION.—My impressions of this season's bird life are much like the present fad of making photographs out of focus, a bit clear yet fuzzy.

The past eight weeks have exhibited in a goodly part of Colorado very cool and rainy weather, in fact it has been so far the coldest summer I ever experienced in the state. There has been no dearth of birds but they seem to have been somewhat quiet and subdued. The crop of Robins has been very large, with the birds more fearless than ever; one has almost to shove them off the sidewalk. They flocked in and about Denver during the first week of August, and then disappeared. After a few days what seemed an influx of new Robins occurred, while at this writing these second birds have vanished. This experience is an added evidence to my conviction that our local Robins leave for other fields early in August. Lazuli Buntings have nested in numbers in Denver this summer; the city has resounded with their songs, one bird having been heard well in toward the business section.

It may seem strange that so many of these Buntings should remain in a city, but it is to be remembered that Denver is essentially a city of trees, very few of its residential streets being without single or double rows of large shade trees.

When the Hairy Woodpecker wanders about our parks after June, one knows that the local nesting season is well over. This species first appeared about my home on July 3. There have been very few California Cuckoos hereabouts this summer; in fact, the species has come under my notice but twice, which is quite a contrast to last summer when these birds were relatively common.

Lark Buntings have been extremely successful in raising their young this year, young birds being out and common as early as June 20. It has been a great satisfaction to have seen near Denver this season two quite uncommon species, viz., the Least Flycatcher and the Marbled Godwit, the first on June 19 and the second on July 23.



Birds have been, seemingly, extremely abundant on the western slope, since both Mrs. Benson of Fruita and Mr. McCrimmon of Montrose speak of abundant bird life about their respective areas.

Ducks have been very common on the western slope and returned to Montrose in numbers on August 8, or even a bit earlier. An outstanding and most gratifying note by Mr. McCrimmon is to the effect that a large flock of Band-tail Pigeons has stayed in the valley a few miles above Montrose. It is greatly to be hoped that this means that the killing of this fine Pigeon has been controlled and that it will soon come back to its own.

It is of unusual interest that Slate-colored Fox Sparrows were seen by Miss Angeline Keen near Montrose, as there are very few records of this Sparrow's occurrence on the western slope.

There has been no scarcity of birds about Loveland these past two months. The usual summer residents have abounded about Mrs. Weldon's home, which is only a few miles west of Loveland. A colony of Violet-green Swallows have nested in the same cliff near her ranch in which the White-throated Swifts are found each summer. This is Mrs. Weldon's first record for this Swallow as a summer resident at her home. Mrs. Weldon also speaks of the extraordinary number of Lazuli Buntings on their property, and writes that they "nested indefatigably" in every thicket. There have been fewer Dickcissels about Loveland, there have been none about Denver so far as I know, and Miss Sutherland tells me that the same scarcity is true of the Boulder area. Notwithstanding this year's scarcity of Dickcissels, the fact of the species having been in the region two summers in succession is encouraging, for it leads one to believe that it is becoming established in the state just as the Red-headed Woodpecker has in recent years. Redstarts have been scarcer about Loveland this summer than usual but to offset this a large number of Cedar Waxwings nested during the past weeks at Mrs. Weldon's ranch.

A very uncommon thing for any part of Colorado was the visit recently of a flock of more than one hundred Ravens at Mrs. Benson's home at Fruita; this observer also

writes that this is the first summer in her recollection that the Vesper Sparrow has nested about Fruita. The ordinary summer birds have been exceedingly common in and about Fruita and other parts of the Grand Valley. I judge from Mrs. Benson's report that the California Cuckoo has been more common in her neighborhood than it has been about Denver.

One can get a pretty fair idea of the richness of bird life about Fruita (and in the Grand Valley) when it is learned that Mrs. Benson has detected more than thirty-five different species nesting on her ranch (about 700 acres) this summer.—W. H. BERGTOLD, *Denver, Colo.*

OREGON REGION.—There has been very little unusual to note about the present season, except the apparent great abundance of certain species of Warblers and Sparrows, mentioned in the last report.

During the latter part of June, the writer was not able to be in the field enough to make any notes. On July 5, he left Portland in a car for Prineville in central Oregon. The only record of any interest in the bird line was the abundance of Merrill's Horned Larks which were seen commonly during the entire trip. The next few days were spent on the Ochoco National Forest, no unusual birds being noted.

On July 8, the first migrating Sandpiper of the season was noted in a little slough near Prineville. It was a lone bird, either a Western or Least Sandpiper, which could not be approached closely enough for identification.

One of the few interesting features of the summer bird life was the presence in unusual numbers of Western Kingbirds in western Oregon, some eight or ten having been seen by various observers in different parts of the Valley. I am not able to state whether this is purely seasonal, or whether these birds are changing their range, owing to changed conditions in this district.

The latter part of July was spent in southern Oregon on the Crater National Forest. Most birds were present in about the usual numbers in this area. Crossbills and Evening Grosbeaks were generally distributed over

the country in scattered flocks, and Brewer's Blackbirds were found ranging through the mountains in flocks of varying sizes. No notes of any unusual birds were made during this period.

On July 30, a trip was made in the afternoon to the Columbia River bottoms and the usual run of birds was noted. The only interesting records were those of a California Cuckoo and the presence of the Red-eyed Vireos. Because of other matters it had been impossible for me to visit the Red-eyed Vireo colony prior to this season, and I was glad to note that they were still present and nesting in this area where they have been for the past several years.

At the present writing, August 15, Swallows in huge autumn flocks are present, one flock of several hundred birds hanging around the bird bath at my home.

On my return home from a trip into Washington August 14, I noticed that the last Bluebirds had left the nests and that the Willow Goldfinch young were able to fly well.

Birds have been exceedingly abundant around my home this year, particularly Bluebirds, Goldfinches, Juncos, and Robins, but since the waning of the berry season the Robins have deserted the place in favor of some other territory.—IRA NOEL GABRIELSON, *Portland, Ore.*

SAN FRANCISCO REGION.—Practically all of those who have been in the habit of sending in items for this report have spent their vacations outside the San Francisco Bay region, so that only a meager outline of bird happenings can be presented. Judging from the numbers of young Anna's and Allen's Hummingbirds which are feeding on the sticky monkey flowers in Strawberry Canyon and also in private gardens, these two species have been successful in nesting activities this year. California Quail are still guarding young about two-thirds grown; Goldfinches, Linnets and Bush-tits are already feeding in flocks. In the open fields at the southern end of the bay large flocks of Brewer's Blackbirds are conspicuous. A few swallows still linger near their nesting-sites but their numbers are much diminished. In the Berkeley Hills,

Lutescent, Pileolated, Tolmie and Yellow Warblers are still present and indulging in an occasional bit of song. Russet-backed Thrushes stopped singing the last week in July but are still here. Adult Spotted and Brown Towhees are moulting but the young are still in juvenal plumage. The only nesting record available is that of a Western Flycatcher which was feeding half-grown young on July 10, the nest being found empty on July 18. On their trip in Marin County on August 14, the Audubon Association found fifty species of birds, among them Ash-throated Flycatchers and several Creepers. On July 9, the writer found a female or young Western Tanager on a Berkeley street and watched it for fifteen minutes as it fed among the maples that bordered the street. Several times it darted out and caught flying insects. In early August other Tanagers in olive-green plumage were seen in a North Berkeley garden.

Mr. Swarth sends in the following report of birds seen from the Key Route trains and ferry boats from June 30 to August 11: Throughout July there were comparatively few Gulls, most of them in young plumages. A few near-adult Western Gulls could be identified. By August 1, a few California Gulls appeared and the numbers increased, but almost all were young and many were moulting. One adult Heermann's Gull was seen on June 30 and August 3; several adults on July 15 and one immature on August 10. Two Cormorants were seen August 5. A Scoter (sp. ?) was recorded June 30 and July 20, while on August 3, there were eight or ten. Curlew were first seen on July 9, the largest numbers occurring on July 20 and August 1. Flocks of Least or Western Sandpipers increased in numbers from July 5, when the first flock was seen. A medium-sized Tern seen on August 9 may have been a Forster's; on August 10 a Caspian was definitely identified.

Mrs. Kelly visited the Alameda shore on August 9 and 10, when she found twenty-four Curlews but no Sandpipers. Flying activities on the part of human beings are so frequent that it will be interesting to see whether the birds will adapt themselves to this new disturbance.—AMELIA S. ALLEN, *Berkeley, Calif.*

LOS ANGELES REGION.—Oppressive heat during most of July was due in part to the prevalence of thunder storms on mountains and deserts, the recorded temperatures and humidity in Los Angeles being very near to the seasonal normal.

June 12, Mrs. Bates and Miss Craig saw, near Azusa, a large flock of Band-tailed Pigeons on a field from which barley had been harvested. Phainopeplas were abundant in Fish Canyon, Wash., and Least Vireos were common.

June 16. The Gray Vireo location was again visited and the pair seen and heard as before. A little distance away, in an area covered by adenostoma, separated from the first by a large patch of junipers, a second Gray Vireo was heard singing, but was not seen. Very intense heat prevailed in that region of rocks on the borders of the desert, and few of the other birds typical of the place were seen. The resident Red-tailed Hawk, White-throated Swifts, some Swallows and Western Gnatcatchers, were all that we saw or heard, a mere fraction of previous lists in that place. Among Joshua trees east of Palmdale we found a pair of Sage Thrashers, a LeConte's Thrasher, and a pair of Desert Sparrows, besides Phainopeplas and Mourning Doves. In Soledad Canyon, a Mountain Quail hurried her little brood away from the stream's edge at our approach to a ford. Many broods of Valley Quail were seen in the lower course of this canyon and in Mint Canyon.

June 22. Spent some time in quiet watching and listening at the Blue Grosbeak's bank in Griffith Park. One Lazuli Bunting seemed to be the only representative of its summer residents present. On this date in 1926, no Blue Grosbeaks were found. In 1925, June 22, full-grown young were seen, but no adults. July 4, 1924, the full grown young were still being fed, and the male was singing.

June 23. Three adult and three immature Heermann's Gulls, first of the season, were seen near Santa Monica. Back of Redondo a Burrowing Owl perched on a sign-board by the roadside.

July 4. In San Antonio Canyon, a Mountain Quail brought her brood to the stream at our door, a regular morning call I was told.

A Cabanis' Woodpecker worked on the alder trees and Western Tanagers, feeding young, were common. As usual, Blue-fronted Jays were first to announce approaching dawn, followed, as the light grew, by the Canyon Wren.

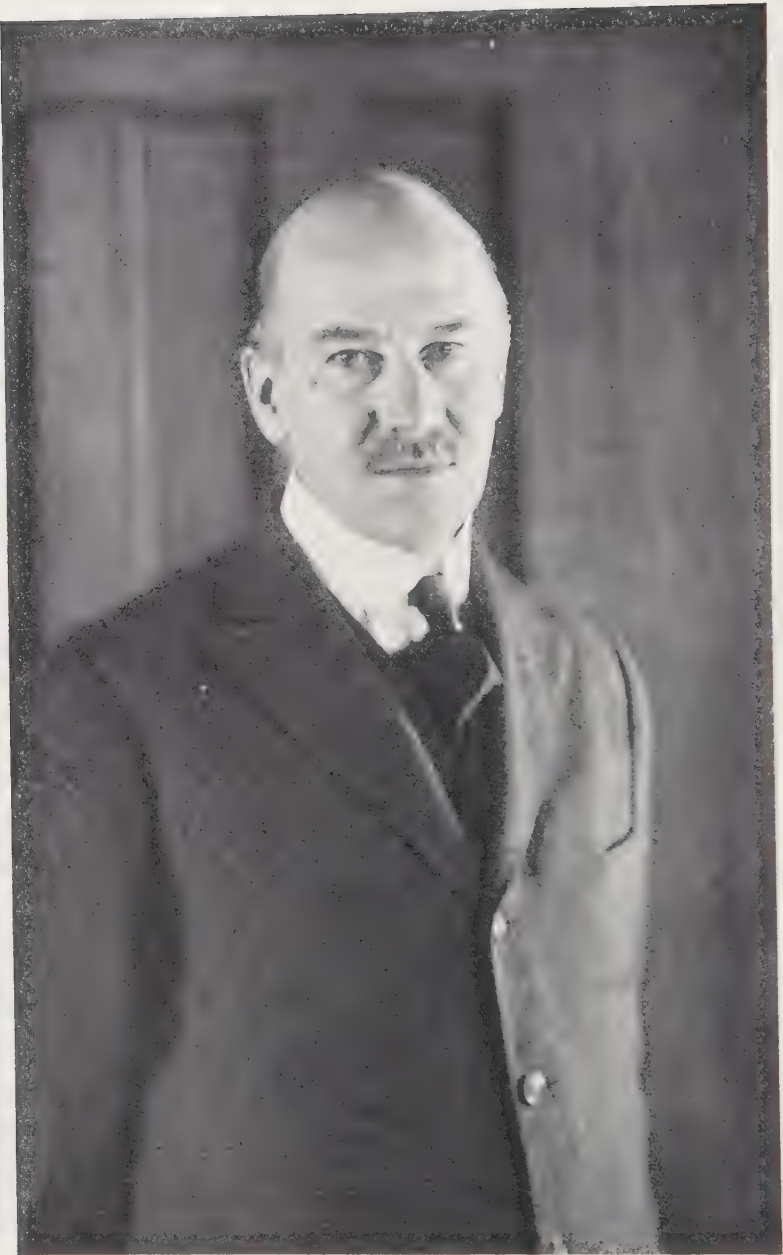
July 7. At Playa del Rey, Cinnamon Teal were seen in the marsh. Nesting season of Black-necked Stilts and Least Terns was at its height. The Terns have not used the clean shell-strewn sand in another part of the marsh, occupied by some of them for two seasons past, but all have concentrated on the flats that are often submerged, with loss of eggs or young. This day brought the first return migrants, 7 Hudsonian Curlews on the beach and a little company of four Semipalmated Plover, one Sanderling and one Least Sandpiper.

July 14. Hudsonian Curlews were common. Black-bellied Plover, Long-billed Dowitchers (25) and small Sandpipers (100) arrived. July 21, more Black-bellied Plover arrived, one in nearly full summer plumage; first Willets came in (23), also Yellow-legs (8), Wilson's Phalaropes (4), Forster's Terns (8), Black Tern (1), and many more Least and Western Sandpipers. Black-necked Stilts were very numerous and demonstrative. We saw several young in various stages from the downy to nearly grown ones, distinguished from adults by their brownish backs, pale colored legs, and somewhat smaller size. There were many young Least Terns and Snowy Plover; eight of the latter had returned to their winter quarters on the beach. July 28, Heermann's Gulls were numerous at Ocean Park; Western Gulls were abundant all along the beaches; more Snowy Plover moved to the beach.

August 1. A flock of Sanderlings and the first Marbled Godwits arrived. About twenty-five Least Terns moved from the marsh to the beach, leaving about the same number in the marsh. Two Loons appeared in the canal.

August 8. Mrs. Bates and Miss Craig saw a Wandering Tattler on the rocks above Santa Monica. August 9. Mrs. Mix reported the presence of two American Egrets at the lake in Westlake Park.—FRANCES B. SCHNEIDER, *Los Angeles, Calif.*





*Louis Agassiz Fuertes*

## Louis Agassiz Fuertes

1874 - 1927

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On the twenty-second day of August last, at Unadilla, N. Y., in crossing a railroad, the approach to which was concealed by a load of hay, the automobile that Louis Agassiz Fuertes was driving was struck by a train and he was instantly killed.

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The Secretary's report of the Fourteenth Congress of the American Ornithologists' Union, held in Cambridge, Mass., November 9-12, 1896, contains this sentence: "Mr. Louis Agassiz Fuertes exhibited and explained a collection of his own unpublished drawings of birds, made from life."<sup>1</sup> This occasion introduced Fuertes and his work to the ornithological world. Those who were present were charmed by the modesty of the artist and unreservedly surprised by his ability to portray birds. His drawings were not only accurate in pose and detail but so faithfully did they present the distinctive characteristics of the original that they seemed almost endowed with life itself. At once their author, then but twenty-two years old, was accorded first place among American bird artists.

Elliot Coues, then Fuertes' mentor and under whose wing he appeared at the Cambridge meeting, gave expression to this opinion in a letter published in *The Osprey* for March, 1897. It reads in part:

My examination of a great many of his designs, both in black and white and in natural colors, makes me think Mr. Fuertes the most promising young artist of birds now living, and one whose work already places him in the very first rank. He is rapidly mastering the technique of his art—in other words, his talent is overtaking his genius—and has already overcome certain crudities which were obvious in his earliest efforts. I say deliberately, with a full sense of my words, that there is now no one who can draw and paint birds so well as Mr. Fuertes, and I do not forget Audubon himself when I add that America has not before produced an ornithological artist of equal possibilities.

Four<sup>2</sup> of Fuertes' drawings were reproduced by half-tone process in connection with Dr. Coues' letter, and for the succeeding thirty years his brush was rarely idle. His talent and personality won for him a place on many expeditions; his services as illustrator were always in demand. He visited Bering Sea, Alberta, Saskatchewan, the Gulf of St. Lawrence, California, Nevada, Texas, Minnesota, Florida, the Bahamas, Yucatan, Mexico, Colombia, and he had only recently returned from Abyssinia. Stimulated by an ever-burning enthusiasm, he was a tireless worker. No opportunity to add to his acquaint-

<sup>1</sup>*Auk*, XIV, 1897, p. 84.

<sup>2</sup>American Rough-legged Hawk, Long-billed Marsh Wren, Screech Owl and Snowy Owl.

ance with birds was wasted, and he acquired during these journeys not only a carefully prepared collection of specimens but a unique series of field studies, particularly of those parts of a bird that lose both color and character in the dried skin.

These sketches supplied the data on which were based the thousands of published drawings that form Fuertes' unequalled and permanent contribution to our knowledge of birds.

Beginning with 'Birding on a Bronco' in 1896, the books he illustrated include 'Citizen Bird,' 'Birdcraft,' 'Handbook of Birds of the Western United States,' 'Coues' 'Key,' 'Handbook of Birds of the Eastern United States,' 'Up-land Game Birds,' 'Waterfowl,' 'Birds of New York,' the 'Burgess Bird Book' and the 'Birds of Massachusetts.' He contributed several series of colored drawings to the *National Geographic Magazine*, and since 1905 his colored plates in BIRD-LORE have been the notable illustrative feature of this magazine. The last one of the series appears in this issue.

Fuertes' art and experience received its first adequate expression in the great series of colored plates accompanying Eaton's 'Birds of New York' (1910). The subsequent publication of these plates in portfolios gave them a circulation, and consequent usefulness, far greater than that reached by most elaborately illustrated books. Concerning them, an editorial in the *New York Times* on Fuertes' work concludes with these words:

But the contribution that will be his permanent monument in this state is his collection of the portraits of the birds of New York (made for the illustration of Eaton's great work on the 'Birds of New York'), which was purchased by Mrs. Russell Sage and presented to the State Museum at Albany. The birds will come and go with the seasons through the years all unwitting of his absence, but they cannot become wholly extinct, for they will be preserved there as in life. He whose skill has given them this sort of immortality, in season and out, needs "no trophy, sword or hatchment o'er his bones," for they in turn will preserve the memory of his genius and of his devotion to them.

With growing regret Fuertes found that his work as an illustrator left him small time for the development of his art as a painter of birds in their haunts, and with the conclusion of the series of plates for 'Birds of Massachusetts,' on which he was engaged at the time of his death, he had determined to accept no more large commissions of this nature.

Nevertheless, in spite of the constant urging and pressure of authors, editors, and publishers, he somehow found time to produce many superb bird portraits and paintings, the most notable of which are probably the twenty-five murals, chiefly of game-birds, painted for Frederick F. Brewster of New Haven. Here, also, should be mentioned Fuertes' part in producing the backgrounds of the Habitat Groups in the American Museum. Several of these panoramic scenes are based on his field-sketches, and the birds in numbers of them, principally the background of the Flamingo group, were painted by him.



It was shortly after this period in Fuertes' career that I prepared for the 'Journal' of the American Museum (March, 1915; see also BIRD-LORE, August, 1915) a brief estimate of Fuertes' work, a portion of which may be reprinted here:

Artists who introduce into their canvases birds as impossibly feathered as conventional angels, artists who paint birds with more or less accuracy of color and form and, more rarely, pose, have not been few in number; but the artists who paint bird portraits based on an intimate, sympathetic, loving study of their subject in nature, and who have the ability to express what they see and feel, can be counted on one's fingers, and the name of Louis Agassiz Fuertes would be included before the second hand was reached.

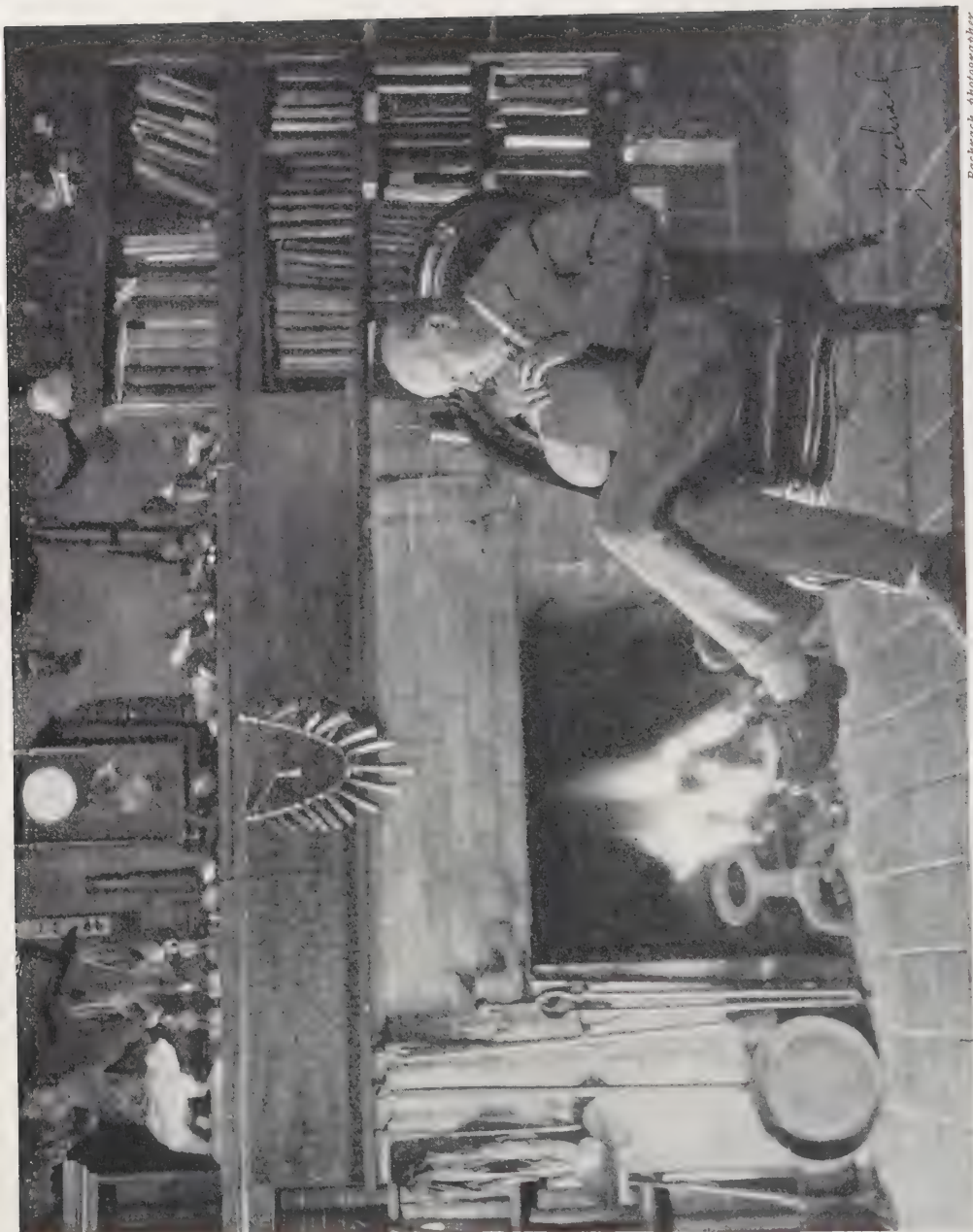
Fuertes, in possession of a freshly captured specimen of some bird which was before unknown to him, is, for the time, wholly beyond the reach of all sensations other than those occasioned by the specimen before him. His concentration annihilates his surroundings. Color, pattern, form, contour, minute details of structure, all are absorbed and assimilated so completely that they become part of himself, and they can be reproduced at any future time with amazing accuracy. Less consciously, but no less thoroughly and effectively, does he store impressions of the bird's appearance in life, its pose, mannerisms, characteristic gestures of wings, tail or crest, its facial expression—all are recorded with surprising fidelity.

This indeed is the keynote of Fuertes' genius—for genius it is. His mind appears to be a delicately sensitized plate designed especially to catch and fix images of bird-life; and of such images he has filed, and has at his fingertips for use, a countless number, for his opportunities for field-study have been greater than those of any other painter of birds. It has been my good fortune to be with Fuertes on many occasions when for the first time we met with some particularly interesting bird in nature. At such times there was perhaps no very marked difference in the extent of our enthusiasm or the manner in which it was expressed, but all the time, subconsciously, Fuertes' mental photographic processes were making record after record. At the moment not a line would be drawn or a note written, but so indelibly and distinctly was etched on his memory what he had seen that it could later be visualized as clearly and faithfully as though the original were before him.

Fuertes' bird portraits, like those of a great portrait painter of men, depict not only those externals which can be seen by any observant person, but they reveal character. . . . His pictures are instinct with life, and differ from the work of the inexperienced or unsympathetic artist as a living bird differs from a stuffed one.

Fuertes' drawings for the 'Birds of Massachusetts,' his last published work, are conceded to have been finer than any illustrations he had previously painted. The sketches secured on his recent journey in Abyssinia are certainly superior to any that he had before made in the field, evidence that Fuertes' art was still developing. He was in his physical prime and should have had many productive years ahead of him. Great, therefore, as is his legacy to mankind, it cannot reconcile us to a loss, the extent of which cannot be estimated.

His love of birds was not restricted to an artist's delight in their forms and



*Bachrach, photographer*

FUERTES IN HIS STUDIO AT ITHACA

colors. He had also a musician's interest in their voices. Twelve years ago, after much urging, for he mistakenly distrusted his powers with a pen, he contributed to BIRD-LORE several articles on the songs of tropical birds which reveal not alone his ability to describe what impressed him but his appreciation of both the musical and spiritual qualities of birds' songs. They reveal, too, so much of Fuertes and of his intense enjoyment of birds in nature that several of these 'Impressions' are reprinted here. The first two relate to so-called Ant-Thrushes of the genera *Grallaria* and *Chamaeza*, long-legged, elusive, terrestrial inhabitants of the undergrowth whose loud, strange notes arouse a curiosity concerning their makers which is not often gratified. To quote:

Little *Grallaria modesta*, from the eastern foot of the Andes at Villavicencio, has a most characteristic little song, all on E. It has seven sharply *staccato* notes, forming a perfect *crescendo* to the fourth, then diminishing to *piano* again at the end. The middle note is strongly accented. This little hermit lives in the sweltering weed-thickets along the sun-baked beds of the lowland streams. I shall never forget an hour in a burr-thicket with nettle accompaniment, at a temperature of perhaps 115°, trying to find the elusive author of that queer little song. At least five times I had him within close range, but never could I see more than a ghost of a movement, or the sudden wiggle of a fern rubbed against in his approach. Nearly discouraged, with hair, eyebrows, and clothes matted thick with little burrs, almost exhausted with the heat, I at last hit upon a very effective scheme. Deliberately clearing out a space of ten to fifteen feet, and a tapering lane through which I could watch the opening, by gently approaching the sound I drove it to a point well beyond my clearing, and retreated to my station. Waiting here a few minutes in silence, I repeated the call, in full loudness, until I got a response. Then, as the bird approached, I did the call more softly, to appear farther away and allay his wariness. My unfair subterfuge worked, the little long-legged piper entered my trap unsuspecting, and I was able to identify it.

Another member of this family, *Chamaeza turdina*, which was found only in luxuriant forests of the Cloud Zone in the Central Andes, he continues:

. . . gave me one of the great song-sensations of my life. I heard a sharp, loud, *wip-wip-wip* and ascribed it to one of the Wood-quail. I hunted it unsuccessfully until I was discouraged and exhausted. Also, I became dully aware of a distant and long-protracted whistle, which I vaguely attributed to a steam-whistle in some neighboring village. So does our common sense become dulled when we are confronted by unfamiliar surroundings! On my tired way back to camp, I realized that there were neither mills, steam, nor villages in these mountains, which are unbroken virgin forest for a hundred miles or more either way. Perhaps I had heard a cicada. I could scarcely credit a bird with such a prolonged sound as this.

The next day I went back to solve the thing. When, after two hours of steep ascent, I had reached the 8,000-foot level, I heard again my mysterious whistle. Listening carefully, and imitating it as well as I could, I was able to discern that the sound became definitely more loud and distinct. No insect, this. Soon I could analyze it quite closely, and found it to be a very gradually rising *crescendo*, beginning about on C, and a full though slightly throbbing



tremolo whistle. I was astonished at its duration, for I could detect no time at which a breath could be taken. Timing three successive songs, I found them to endure forty-seven, fifty-seven, and fifty-three seconds! This was more than twice the length of any continuous song I have ever heard, the Winter Wren being second with twenty-eight seconds. But in this broken song there are surely many opportunities to catch the thimbleful of breath a Wren can hold, while the *Chamaea* song was one long, unbroken, and constantly increasing sound.

Eventually, my singer came so near that I was afraid of scaring it away by the imperfection of my imitation, which required a full breath out, an in-breath to full lung-capacity, and then the last bit of breath I could expel to accomplish even a forty-second song! So I sat silent, tense, and eager, hoping almost against hope that the mystery-bird would reveal himself. Suddenly, almost at my heels, a song began. Very soft and throaty at first, gradually rising and filling, the steady throbbing *crescendo* proceeded until I was so thrilled that I was afraid I couldn't stand it any longer. I dared not move, as I was in plain sight, on the edge of a scar in the earth from a recently uprooted tree. Finally, though, the tension was relaxed; the song ceased. Where would it be next time? In front of me? Or would the singer see me and depart for good, still a mystery? Even as I was thinking these things, a ghostly-silent little shadow sped dangleing past me and came to a halt about thirty feet away, half lost in the dark fog, on the far side of the raw little clearing. In awful anxiety lest he become swallowed up in the mist and lost to me, and with a great effort not to lose the dim impression of the faintly-seen bird, I moved slightly for a better view. My long watch was futile, for my spirit bird disappeared. I sat awhile and mourned, with a great deal of invective in my heart. But soon realizing that this was futile, I decided to practise the song I had learned. Imagine my surprise, after the first attempt, to hear, close by, the loud *wip-wip* of yesterday, and to see it followed almost immediately by another ghost-bird, which had the grace to alight or stop running (I couldn't be positive which) within range and in sight. This proved to be *C. turdina*. Although we often heard the curious, protracted song later, when we went to the top of the range, we never again caught sight of this little-known bird.

For depth of appreciation and expression of pure sentiment I do not recall anything in the literature of ornithology that exceeds Fuertes' description of the call of the Tinamou (*Crypturus*). William Brewster was deeply affected by the soft, wailing notes of this bird, and his emotions were almost equally stirred by Fuertes' tribute to them. It reads:

In the tropics, as in more familiar scenes, the bird-songs of the fields are frank, pastoral, and prevalent. With us, the Meadowlark, Field Sparrow, Vesper and Song Sparrows pipe often and openly, and, from May to October, their notes are almost constantly in the air. But the forest birds are more reluctant singers, and their rare notes are all mystery, romance, and reclusive shyness. The Field Sparrow will sit on a dock-stalk and sing, looking you in the eyes; the Veery will quietly fade away when your presence is discovered . . .

But, enter the forest, and all is of another world. For a long time, perhaps, as you make your way through the heavy hush of its darkened ways, no sound strikes the ear but the drip of water from spongy moss-clumps or broad leaves.



AN AMERICAN MUSEUM PACK-TRAIN APPROACHING PTARMIGAN PASS IN THE CANADIAN ROCKIES—FUERTES LEADING

You feel yourself to be the only animate thing in your universe. All at once, perhaps far off through the forest, perhaps close behind you, you hear the strangely moving whinny of a Tinmaou. I think no sound I have ever heard has more deeply reached into me and taken hold. Whether it is the intensity of feeling that a deep, silent forest always imposes; the velvet smoothness of the wailing call; the dramatic crescendo and diminuendo that exactly parallels its minor cadence up and down a small scale; something, perhaps the combination of all these, makes one feel as if he had been caught with his soul naked in his hands, when, in the midst of his subdued and chastened revery, this spirit-voice takes the words from his tongue and expresses too perfectly all the mystery, romance, and tragedy that the struggling, parasite-ridden forest diffuses through its damp shade. No vocal expression could more wonderfully convey this intangible, subduing, pervasive quality of silence; a paradox, perhaps, but not out of place with this bird of mystery.

Specialization did not limit the range of Fuertes' interests. After a lifetime of intense and ceaseless devotion to his profession, he was still highly sensitive to other influences in his environment. Aside from biology, his special attention was claimed by music, art, architecture, archaeology, and exploration. But even before his beloved birds, first place in his affections was accorded his own species. The key-note of his nature was whole-souled, sympathetic responsiveness to his fellow man.

His clear-eyed, sunny temperament; his generosity, simplicity, and genuine-

ness; his spontaneous humor and originality of expression made him universally popular. He appeared to have something in common with people in every walk of life and of all ages, and always it was the best in them to which he appealed. He was absolutely dependable. One never had to wonder what Fuertes meant when he made a statement. What he said could be taken at face value. He was instinctively helpful, and having unusual facility in the art of 'making things,' the requests for his assistance seemed unlimited, and always he dropped his own work to respond to them.

An accurate and discriminating 'musical ear,' a retentive musical memory, and a fluent whistle made Fuertes a remarkably successful mimic of birds' songs. No bird meeting at which he was present seemed complete without an exhibition of his powers, which admirably equipped him to lecture on the subject of bird-music. He could reproduce not only the notes and form, but the sentiment of a bird's song. The reverent spirit with which an audience listened to his rendering of the song of the Hermit Thrush was a tribute alike to the bird and to its imitator. With equal truth and effect he could produce the throat-splitting, raucous squawk of a Macaw, and he liked to tell how on entering the Bird-House in Rock Creek one day at noon, and finding the Parrots all calmly sleeping, he uttered this call and so surprised its inmates that one and all they lost their grip and dropped to the bottom of the cage with a thump.

His delicately sensitized mind recorded not only his impressions of birds but of men, and this attribute, in connection with his power to imitate and his exceptional histrionic gifts, made his services as raconteur and after-dinner speaker always in demand.

It was as a camp-mate that one had the best opportunity to learn the extent of Fuertes' talents and to sound the depths of his character. The trials of camp-life and the inconveniences and hardships of travel in remote places are too often beyond the endurance of fair-weather travelers, but with Fuertes they merely supplied the acid test which proved the pure gold of his nature. His enthusiasm, his wide interests and discriminating appreciation, his quick wit, his pleasure in your pleasure, made him so ideal a field companion that once having traveled with him one never wanted to go without him.

It was my blessed privilege to travel and camp with Fuertes from Canada to Colombia, from sea-level to snow-line. There were not lacking in these journeys, which aggregated over 60,000 miles—mishaps and disappointments, but it was indeed a major misfortune which dampened Fuertes' ardor or shadowed the sunniness of his disposition. I can see him now, after ten days' fruitless hunting of flamingoes, with knees and elbows cut by crawling over coral rock, with one barrel of his gun split from breech to muzzle by a discharge when it was plugged with sand, still dauntless and undiscouraged. And the zeal of the hunter changed to the enthusiasm of the artist when the luck of the chase brought the first Flamingo to another member of the party.



I recall occasion after occasion when, with strength spent to the limit of endurance, he would be almost miraculously revived by the sight of some bird or the sound of its voice. Such an event he has himself described in writing of the birds of a Magdalena River marsh:

I shall not soon forget an hour spent in retrieving an Everglade Kite in the great marsh at Calamar. Here the one pervasive sound was the constant, irritating hum of the myriads of ravenous mosquitoes. Things were not helped by the discovery that I was soon on a false bottom, made only of the suspended roots of the vegetation that rose ten feet above me, so that I went through, and had to go the rest of the way on my knees, up to my armpits in tepid water. As I had a gun and a glass to keep dry, this was no joke, and I think that was the most miserable hour I ever went through. At the end I was absolutely spent, and could only crawl out and lie down—easy meat for the mosquitoes—for another hour. But it had its recompenses. Into the willow-like shrubbery over me came the beautiful little Yellow-headed Blackbird of the tropics and sang his Orchard Oriole song. Nearby, Great-tailed Grackles squealed, piped, and pointed their bills aloft in their nuptial attitudinizing. The red-breasted 'Meadowlark,' *Leistes*, also came to close quarters, though it did not sing, and I watched the lovely and delicate little black-and-white marsh Flycatchers almost at arm's length.

Equally trying, but of a wholly different kind, was an experience that illustrated Fuertes' tact and good nature, invaluable assets to the traveler, particularly in southern countries.

We had stopped at a little inn in the heart of the Andes to prepare some specimens secured during the preceding day's journey. The one room was lighted by a single door and this was darkened by a group of natives intently



FUERTES HELPING HIS HORSE OVER THE 'CAMELLONES' OF AN ANDEAN TRAIL

watching Fuertes skinning and drawing birds. With unfailing patience Fuertes would ask them to move and always they quickly obeyed, only to crowd back again as their curiosity overcame their desire to oblige. Finally they became so fascinated by Fuertes' work and by the man himself that when, after several hours' labor he started for the field, they all declared their intention of accompanying him! Did Fuertes protest? not a word! He cordially welcomed them and then, heading for a near-by marsh, plunged in and left a row of wondering men standing on its border, or, as he expressed it, he "combed them out."

Fuertes' value in the field was not restricted to his cheerful comradeship and his skill as an artist. He was a keen, tireless, and persistent collector and a stimulating scientific associate. In the Canadian Rockies it was Fuertes who discovered the nests of Ptarmigan and Pipit that appear in the American Museum's Arctic-Alpine Group. In Mexico it was Fuertes who in the field recognized as new the Oriole subsequently named for him, and in the dense subtropical forests of the Colombian Andes he secured specimens and identified the notes of birds which no other member of our party saw.

Nor did he confine his activities to science and art, to preserving birds as well as to painting them. Always he did more than his share of the work incident to travel and life in the open. He was an experienced woodsman, a good packer, a capital cook, a master hand with tools, who could mend anything, and in adversity and sickness no mother could have been more tender.

So one might continue to enumerate the qualities for which Fuertes was beloved and still fail to convey a realization of the rare personal charm which made his mere presence a source of joyous possibilities. To those whose lives were enriched by his friendship the world will never be the same again.—

FRANK M. CHAPMAN.

# Book News and Reviews

GENERAL ORNITHOLOGY: LABORATORY NOTE-BOOK FOR THE RECORDING OF OBSERVATIONS MADE IN THE FIELD AND STUDIES MADE IN THE LABORATORY ON THE BIRDS OF EASTERN NORTH AMERICA. By A. A. ALLEN, professor, L. A. FUERTES, lecturer, M. D. PIRNIE, instructor in ornithology, Cornell University. The Comstock Publishing Company, Ithaca, N. Y.

Some textbooks are designed to meet theoretical needs; others are the outcome of definite, pre-existing wants. The present volume belongs in the latter class. Ornithology at Cornell has won for itself a place creditable alike to the University and the science. There one may acquire a balanced conception of birds—their place in nature and their relation to man. This volume presents the methods of study which have been evolved in the laboratory and field, and as the outcome of actual experience they have a proved value.

The lessons include studies of the bird's skeleton, external parts and feathers; keys or the orders and families of North American birds; migration data for birds of central New York, a field roll book, a key to birds' nests, and 125 identification and life-history sheets for intensive studies. These sheets are supplied with outline maps for charting distribution and with outline figures of the birds drawn by Fuertes, for coloring. The whole plan seems practical, interesting, and instructive.—F. M. C.

THE RELATION OF BIRDS TO WOODLOTS IN NEW YORK STATE. By W. L. MCATEE. Roosevelt Wild Life Bulletin. Vol. IV, No. 1. Oct., 1926. 152 pages. 4 plates (2 colored). 22 figures.

After describing the importance of the woodlot in forestry, Mr. McAtee adds, "the purpose of this paper is to reveal the part played by the bird population in woodlots, to demonstrate the advantages of taking birds into consideration in woodland management, and to show how this can in fact be accomplished."

After a detailed treatment of the food-

habits of woodlot birds based chiefly on the investigations of the Biological Survey, their economic relations are considered subjectively under the general heading of 'The Role of Birds in Woodlot Ecology,' while the extent of this role is further shown on pages 101-136, which are devoted to a description of 'Some Forest Insect Pests and Their Bird Enemies.'

Mr. McAtee concludes that birds are a prime agency in reforestation, that they do much to keep down the serious rodent enemies of trees, and that they wage warfare on practically every insect foe of the forest. Obviously, therefore, we should protect and encourage our forest-inhabiting birds and on pages 139-142 of this valuable report Mr. McAtee tells us how this may be done.—F. M. C.

ABSTRACT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE LINNÆAN SOCIETY OF NEW YORK FOR THE TWO YEARS ENDING MARCH 23, 1926. New York, 1927.

The Linnæan Society is a clearing-house for the exchange of news concerning the birds of the New York City region. The first 72 pages of this Abstract are occupied with reports of its meetings (at the American Museum of Natural History) at which the attendance and the observations presented are an index to an active and growing interest in the study of local bird-life.

In the first of the three papers which follow this 'Abstract of Proceedings', Mr. Ludlow Griscom has done an excellent and valuable piece of work in extracting from the journals of the late Eugene P. Bicknell the more significant facts recorded concerning the birds of Riverdale, N. Y., from 1872 to 1901. As Mr. Griscom well remarks, "seldom, if ever, has a student of the present day, more or less familiar with local conditions, been privileged to contrast his findings with an authoritative picture of conditions fifty years ago in the same place."

In 'A Detailed Report on the Bird Life of



the Greater Bronx Region,' Mr. John F. Kuerzi summarizes existing information concerning the birds of an area which includes that in which Mr. Bicknell worked. He lists 274 species, of which 95 breed annually.

The third paper, by Mr. Lester L. Walsh, on the 'Birds of Prospect Park, Brooklyn,' completes a trio of most useful contributions to our knowledge of the bird-life of the New York City region. The Linnæan Society is to be congratulated on this restriction of its interests to the field which is distinctively its own.—F. M. C.

### The Ornithological Magazines

THE AUK.—The July number, which contains subject matter of unusual variety and general interest, opens with a discussion of the Hummingbirds of California by R. S. Woods, illustrated with three half-tone plates, attractive photographs of four species. Field differentiation of the several species is discussed in detail. They differ in manner of display; and the quality of sound produced by the wings as well as the vocal utterances provide useful distinctions. The nesting of Costa's Hummingbird is described in detail. The incubation period is found to be about 16 days, young to remain in the nest 20 to 23 days, and number of young fledged to be about  $\frac{1}{3}$  the number of eggs laid, the consequent small annual increase suggesting that the Hummingbird enjoys long life for a creature of such diminutive size.

In studying the feeding-range of certain species by marking individual birds at Ithaca, N. Y., W. K. Butts finds the White-breasted Nuthatch traveling in pairs throughout the winter with a definite feeding territory, and nesting, the ensuing spring, within that territory. Daily feeding-ranges of the Tree Sparrow and Junco in winter were also quite restricted. A nesting pair of Song Sparrows had their territory restricted by the presence of a neighboring pair occupying an adjacent territory, and that of the first was enlarged when these neighbors disappeared. There are also interesting observations on Downy Woodpecker, Chickadee, and particularly the Robin.

In a very detailed study of feathering of the House Wren and feather-growth in its

young (illustrated with various diagrammatic figures), R. Boulton finds that the first appearance of feathers and the sequence of their development in the various regions (to which feather-growth is confined) follow in definite order. Growth of feathers appears to be retarded until the second week of nestling life, largely due to the fact that development is meanwhile going on beneath the skin.

Winter habits of the Ruffed Grouse, its roosting in the snow, etc., are described by R. A. Johnson (two plates). J. Grinnell discusses the designation of birds' ranges in terms of climatic areas. J. T. Nichols gives field characters for New Zealand Shearwater and Fisher's Petrel as observed off the north-west coast, and favors the opinion that dark and light Fulmars are something more than two equivalent color-phases. D. J. Nicholson presents excellent photographs of Wayne's Clapper Rail, its eggs and young.

For faunal papers, Bailey's 'Notes on the Birds of Southeastern Alaska' is concluded. Here a singular incident is narrated of an Oregon Junco flushing from its nest directly into the mouth of a cat, that grabbed it and started across the street, running into a dog which gave chase, and the bird was turned loose in the cat's scramble to escape the dog. This Junco returned to her nest and was successful in raising her brood. From diagonally across the continent, Bent and Copeland give annotations on 165 forms from the middle section of Florida, and bring forward evidence for the distinctness of Cory's Least Bittern as a species. General notes of faunal interest are from North Carolina (H. H. Brimley), South Carolina (A. L. Pickens), Georgia (T. D. Burleigh), the Chicago area (C. W. G. Eifrig), Colorado (C. E. H. Aiken and W. H. Bergtold), and various scattered localities. A number of observers have seen a Glossy Ibis in Delaware, May 27 and 30.

Among other items in General Notes we find young of the Western Mourning Dove leaving the nest about February 23, and eggs hatching as late as September 4 (F. F. Gander), an astonishingly long breeding season! Penard gives an interesting description of our Yellow Warbler in Dutch Guiana, —J. T. N.,

# Bird-Lore

A Bi-Monthly Magazine

Devoted to the Study and Protection of Birds

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE AUDUBON SOCIETIES

Edited by FRANK M. CHAPMAN

Contributing Editor, MABEL OSGOOD WRIGHT

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Bird-Lore's Motto:

*A Bird in the Bush Is Worth Two in the Hand*

THE wildness of wild Ducks is proverbial. Strong of wing, keen of sight, quick to sense danger, they are among the most wary of birds. To outwit them the sportsman has developed endless paraphernalia—blinds, batteries, sneak-boxes, decoys, in wide variety. Nearly every point and 'pass' over which Ducks fly, practically every accessible place in which they feed conceals, during the 'open season,' their enemy, man. But with what skill they evade him. How they learn the range of shot-guns! How they 'tower' high over passes! How they change their feeding-habits to secure greater safety!

It is this alert perceptiveness and adaptability which has ensured their continued existence in the face of persecution to which most species would long ago have succumbed. Of the army of six million or more hunters who annually take the field in this country, no small part wages warfare against the Ducks. So prevalent is this custom of pursuit on one side and of attempt to escape on the other that one might well imagine it represented the natural relation between man and birds. But we have only to declare peace, to offer safety and food where before was sudden death, and behold almost immediately the wildest of birds become among the tamest!

Visitors to Florida, particularly to the towns on the Halifax and Indian rivers, are familiar with this phenomenon, but there probably has been no more impressive illustration of wild Ducks accepting man's friendship than the one described by Mr.

Joseph Dixon in this number of BIRD-LORE.

Mr. Dixon's pictures graphically illustrate the confidence with which Ducks of several species have become guests of the city of Oakland; hospitality they repay a hundred-fold by the mere fact of their presence and all that it implies.

How infinitely more attractive and appealing are these free creatures than the usual park lake assortments of more or less soiled, ragged, and mutilated so-called 'ornamental water-fowl'!

We have in this country many hundreds of clubs for the purpose of killing Ducks. The mere name 'Duck Club,' implies without question, that its members are Duck-hunters. Now what an admirable thing it would be to organize Duck Clubs whose membership would include Ducks as well as men!

We cannot all have a Lake Merritt at our doors, but there are countless ponds, lakes, and water-fronts to which Ducks could be attracted by systematic feeding and proper protection. Jack Miner's marvelous success with Geese is a case in point. The cost, as compared with the maintenance of a zoölogical park, is insignificant. The result arouses an interest which captive birds do not awaken, and our pleasure is immeasurably increased when we realize that we are giving sanctuary to birds which are hunted so constantly that, during the open season, there are few places where they may feed and rest undisturbed.

When, as a race, our love of birds equals our desire to kill them, we may even go beyond the immediate vicinity of our homes in search of haunts frequented by water-fowl and compete with the hunting clubs for their control. At present it must be admitted that the motives which prompt the hunter are stronger than those that animate the humanitarian.

Dr. Phillips' account of the fish-eating Catbird published in this issue of BIRD-LORE gives points to the belief that birds, like men, must be considered as individuals, not as species.

Even the most unreasonable pisciculturist would not think of condemning all Catbirds for the sins of one. Why cannot we be equally fair in judging other birds?

# The Audubon Societies

## SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

Edited by A. A. ALLEN, Ph.D.

Address all communications relative to the work of this department to the Editor, Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y.

### THE PASSING OF A GREAT TEACHER: LOUIS AGASSIZ FUERTES

Some of the greatest teachers the world has ever known were never heard in the classroom. From 1896, when he published his first bird portrait, until 1925, when he joined the zoölogical staff of Cornell University, Louis Agassiz Fuertes was such a teacher. For the past three years he has held the position of Lecturer in Ornithology at Cornell University, and was well embarked upon a more formal type of teaching when his untimely death on August 22 robbed the University and a long succession of students of one of the most inspiring teachers that has ever entered a classroom door.

As a teacher, Fuertes was unique. He spoke but little and he wrote less. But with his pencil and his brush he developed a technique in portraying living birds more accurately and more expressively than had ever been done before.



FUERTES AS PRESIDENT OF THE CAYUGA BIRD CLUB ADDRESSING  
SCHOOL CHILDREN AND THEIR PARENTS



And for thirty years his brush was never idle though his deep interest in his fellowmen often took him from his work or delayed his inspirations. Under his influence the standard of bird-portraiture has been so infinitely raised that even the man on the street and the child in the schoolroom is no longer satisfied with bright colors and conventionalized form as representing our birds. Nowadays the picture of a bird, whether in a textbook or on a billboard, must measure up to the bird it represents. And this is largely, I believe, due to Fuertes and his painstaking care to have every one of his illustrations not only accurate in every detail but likewise expressive of the life and the very personality of the bird. Nothing was ever "good enough" with Fuertes. His pictures were always the very best that hard study and close observation could produce. Occasionally he was called upon to paint birds with which he was not very familiar, but he always disliked to do this, for he realized that the result could not be 100 per cent perfect, and he accepted the charge only when no one else could do it.

It was the wild, free bird that gave Fuertes his greatest inspiration, though he developed marvelous skill in later years in interpreting museum specimens, and he never lost an opportunity to study, with infinite care, any bird, living or dead, that came into his possession. His pleasure at being able to handle a Hawk or an Owl and rearrange its feathers, and place it in a dozen different positions, all characteristic of the species, was an inspiration to behold. Such eagerness and zest, combined with infinite tenderness and patience, made him oblivious to everything except the bird before him.

Fuertes often told the story of a museum taxidermist whose work he greatly admired, and I think he enjoyed telling it because it exactly expressed his own feelings. He inquired of this taxidermist how he was able to sit down and mount a Hawk with its feathers all fluffed out, its eyes glistening, and its expression all alert, and then to turn around and mount a Duck with its close, hard feathers and expressionless eye and get them both so true to life. The man's reply was this: "Oh! Mr. Fuertes, when I mount a Hawk I feel all Hawky, and when I mount a Duck I just feel all Ducky." I have often thought the same when I have seen Louis Fuertes arranging a subject to paint. Were it a Falcon with a Quail in its talons, he seemed ready himself to scream defiance and tear the little bird to pieces, while were it a Robin that he was painting, he would be in quite a different mood, whistling cheerfully and quite care-free. Little wonder that Fuertes' birds are real birds and each one expressive of the one species depicted. Little wonder that Fuertes' birds are live birds ready to flit from the page into the nearest tree.

Fuertes always decried the thought that he was blessed with any particular genius, either in drawing or in interpreting birds. What technique he developed he always credited to that great artist-naturalist, Abbot Thayer, from whom he undoubtedly received great inspiration. Certainly he did not depend upon inspiration alone to paint his birds. His studio was full of sketches

of birds made in the field, color-drawings of fresh bills and feet and other parts that might change in museum specimens, and he had a personal collection of several thousand bird-skins, collected and beautifully prepared by himself, to all of which he had constant recourse in making his paintings. His was an artistic temperament, however, and days would pass without his being able to do a thing, to be suddenly followed by an inspiration that would enable him to nearly complete five or six birds in a single day. And this inspiration might last for a week or more, during which time he would turn out an immense amount of work.

Unlike many artists, Fuertes was intensely human and loved all the sports and diversions of a college life. The association with young minds was very dear to him, and he acted in a fatherly capacity to an ever-increasing procession of students who loved to drop into his studio for words of encouragement or advice as well as to see him at work.

Fuertes loved children and always maintained a keen interest in the work of the Boy Scouts. For the past five years he had been chairman of the Camp Committee of the Ithaca Council, a member of the Board of Examiners and the Executive Board. By one and all he was called 'Uncle Louie' and many



LOUIS AGASSIZ FUERTES STUDYING HIS FAVORITE BIRD—  
A YOUNG DUCK HAWK



'UNCLE LOUIE' AND THE CHILDREN OF THE CAYUGA BIRD CLUB

a boy restrained his destructive instincts because 'Uncle Louie' would not like it. Children flocked to his studio after school hours, and he devoted as much time to them as to his more mature friends. He took keen pleasure in showing them his tray of Hummingbird skins from South America and listening to their "Ohs" and "Ahs" as he turned them at different angles to display their iridescent colors.

About town he was always the best-beloved member of the University community, and his fellow townsmen, even as frequently as the students and



the children, dropped into his studio, sure of a hearty welcome. Every civic enterprise enrolled his name, from the Rotary Club to the Charity Ball, and to each he gave so generously of himself that often but few hours were left for his chosen work.

It was this love of mankind, together with his high ideals of bird-portraiture, that has given Fuertes his eminence as a teacher. He taught not by precept, but by example, and his example of combining art with scientific accuracy will go down with the ages, to be emulated but never to be excelled.

Fuertes was not an orator—his manner of speaking and frequent digressions often made it difficult for students to take notes on his lectures—but so vivid was his personality, so original his vocabulary, so humorous his metaphors, and so warm his human sympathy, that notes were never necessary. Students left the classroom inspired. They remembered everything he said and discussed it among themselves as though it had been a baseball game. It was not study to them; it was recreation. Those who have heard Fuertes on the formal lecture platform have occasionally been disappointed, for whenever he felt constrained, he did not indulge in those flights of metaphors that made his informal discourse so delightful. But with students he always felt at home; he was one of them and one with them, and they responded with the best that was in them.

In future years should it be thought desirable to perpetuate his name in some formal fashion, more appropriate than any monument would be a memorial to encourage students to follow the trail which he has blazed; follow until the trail becomes a road and the road a boulevard leading up to the ideal which he has established—truth and accuracy in the art of ornithology as well as in the science.—A. A. ALLEN.

## FROM YOUNG OBSERVERS

### BROWNY *vs.* DOWNY

On the afternoon of March 23 I was walking through a small wood near my home in quest of birds, when suddenly I heard a slight tapping on a dead stub about 15 feet high just in front of me. At first I saw no one that could be the author of these mysterious sounds, for they sounded like a Woodpecker excavating his nesting-hole, only not quite so loud, and it was only after walking around the stub twice that I discovered him.

About 10 feet up was a small hole, a little larger around than a man's thumb, from which the short stiff tail of a very small bird protruded. He was busily engaged in digging a cavity for a nest, and I readily concluded he was some kind of a Nuthatch, but was at a loss to determine what species until he came out to drop a few small chips from his bill.

Then, as he remained clinging to the tree, head downward, by his long toes,

looking at me (for I had approached very close) in the most trustful and confiding manner. I easily identified him by his small size, his brown head, and the white of the nape of his neck, as the Brown-headed Nuthatch, a species peculiar to southeastern United States.

A great longing swept over me for a camera, so that I might take back to my study one of those beautiful glimpses of nature that we all love so dearly and cherish so highly, but I had none.

Suddenly a Downy Woodpecker lit on the dead tree a few feet below the Nuthatch, and began busily searching for insects. As quick as a flash 'Browny' went for Downy and in a few moments the intruder was well away from the neighborhood, with, I guess, no strong desire to return, and our small but fearless hero was back at work as unconcernedly as if nothing had happened, busily digging away in his hole, which was already 2 to 3 inches deep, and emerging every few moments to drop a few small chips, hardly pausing for breath.

Eleven days later I returned to find the Nuthatch absent, but the result of his labor could be seen, for the ground beneath the hole was covered with fine chips, much smaller than those made by a Woodpecker in excavating his nesting cavity. The hole itself appeared to be finished, for it was much deeper and there were already a few straws in the cavity that would soon hold the five or six small speckled eggs which 'Browny's' mate would lay for him, secure from wind, storm, and all intruders.—BILLY WARD (age 14 years), Grade 9, *Timmons ville, S. C.*

### SOMETHING INTERESTING

Something very interesting happened at 4 Bishop Road, Guilford, Md. A young Robin fell out of his nest into a cellar-hole. I went into the cellar-hole and tried to catch him. I then caught him and put him on the lawn. After a while the older birds came. One of them caught him by the neck and flew away with him.—KARL F. L. GROSCHE, 755 *W. Cross St., Baltimore, Md.*

### THE NEST THE DOVE USED

I am a member of the Long Hollow Bird Club. We have 25 members. We study birds in school and report what we can learn of interest at home and in the fields and woods. We build bird-houses at home, and try to protect the birds.

When our Club meets again, I have an observation to report. A Catbird built a nest in an apple tree near my window last spring. Since the family of Catbirds left, a Dove has taken possession of the nest and is sitting on her two eggs during the last week in August. I did not know before that Doves ever adopt the old nests of other birds. This is the Dove's second laying. She had a nest in an apple tree nearby and raised a fine pair of youngsters early in the spring. The second time she preferred the Catbird's nest to her own.

I am eleven years old. I am in the fourth grade. I like to go to school because our teacher helps us to study the birds.—VERTIE L. MOSELEY, *Pennington Gap, Va.*

### SNOWY OWL IN OHIO

I don't know whether you would be interested in this letter or not, but I thought I would send it to you anyway. I got this information from my chum, Dallas Moore, who lives 15 miles east of Zanesville, Ohio.

Dallas was out hunting Saturday, November 13, 1926, in a big woods, when he observed a large white Owl sitting on the ground a few feet in front of him. In a few seconds it flew to a fence-post nearby. The Owl looked nearly 2 feet long and had a wingspread of over 3 feet. It had no ear-tufts. Dallas did not shoot the Owl. I am sending you this information for I would like to know if this was a Snowy Owl, and if it has ever been reported in southeastern Ohio before. Also, if it is rare news I thought maybe you would like to print it in BIRD-LORE.—VIRGIL EVANS, *Norwich, Ohio.*

### THE CLINTON G. ABBOTT JUNIOR AUDUBON CLUB

The Clinton G. Abbott Junior Audubon Club was organized several months ago by Mr. F. F. Gander, instructor of the O'Rourke Zoölogical Institute, and myself. We have now secured over thirty members and are getting new ones.

By a majority vote we agreed that each member should pay to the Club 5 cents a month to be used eventually to buy a lot on which we shall establish a bird sanctuary. Although this sounds rather impossible, it is not, as a lot can be bought in our back country for \$50 and we have already secured \$5.

Mr. F. F. Gander, our instructor, has already taught us many things about birds, their nesting-habits, and their food, and it is under his supervision that the Club is conducted.

Among our numerous activities, those of securing points by erecting bird-houses, establishing feed-tables, identifying birds in the field, and excelling in contests on bird-lore are the most popular. The person first securing 150 points receives a book donated by Mr. Albert E. Stillman.

At the present time we are all working hard to secure this prize. Leroy Arnold is in the lead, with 72 points. He has identified 65 different species in the field, among them: Tule Yellowthroat, Texas Nighthawk, Phainopepla, Rufous-crowned Sparrow, and Surf-bird. Willard Maxwell is next, with 50 points, having identified some 40 species.

This by no means is our only activity, as we also have bird-talks and discussions at our meetings which come on the second Saturday in each month, usually having bird-walks on the intervening Saturdays.—JACK BINKLEY (age 12 years), *San Diego, Calif.*



# The Audubon Societies

## EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Edited by T. GILBERT PEARSON, LL.D., President

Address all correspondence, and send all remittances, for dues and contributions, to the National Association of Audubon Societies, 1974 Broadway, New York City.  
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Any person, club, school or company in sympathy with the objects of this Association may become a member of it, and all are welcome.

Classes of Membership in the National Association of Audubon Societies for the Protection of Wild Birds and Animals:

\$5 annually pays for a Sustaining Membership  
\$100 paid at one time constitutes a Life Membership  
\$1,000 constitutes a person a Patron  
\$5,000 constitutes a person a Founder  
\$25,000 constitutes a person a Benefactor

FORM OF BEQUEST:—I do hereby give and bequeath to the National Association of Audubon Societies for the Protection of Wild Birds and Animals (Incorporated), of the City of New York.

## NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

Announcement is made to members that in accordance with the By-Laws of this organization the twenty-third annual meeting of the National Association of Audubon Societies for the Protection of Wild Birds and Animals will be held on October 25, 1927. This will take place in the American Museum of Natural History, New York City, at 10 o'clock A.M.

Reports of the President, Treasurer, and Field Agents of the Association will be read,

and various other matters of interest to the members of the Society will be discussed. Luncheon will be served to members and delegates.

The meeting for the general public will be held at 8 P.M. on the preceding evening, Monday, October 24, in the lecture hall of the Museum, on which occasion an attractive and instructive program will be rendered. The public is cordially invited to attend all sessions.

## A-BIRDING IN UTAH

When one bright sunny morning the train on which I had journeyed westward came to a stop at the station in Salt Lake City, it was a pleasure to meet David H. Madsen, the State Game Warden, arrayed in khaki and wearing a genial smile on his strong tanned face. In his car we journeyed southward sixty-five miles to the Strawberry Reservoir Federal Bird Reservation. Here, on horses, we left the sage-brush country and climbed for many miles along Co-op Creek that flows down a forest-clad valley. Reaching the top of the divide we wound down the long course

of Current Creek until, just at dark, camp was made in a little aspen grove overlooking the narrow valley with its beaver ponds and interminable thickets of willow.

There were several men in the party and the journey had been made for the purpose of trout fishing. The region abounded in birds with many of which the writer had scant personal knowledge, and when new birds are about his interest in angling is ever at a low ebb. Hence, while the others for several days fished the waters of Current Creek, I haunted the willows, the sage-brush

flats and the mountain slopes, field-glass in hand.

Morning and evening the thickets rang with the Veery-like songs of the Willow Thrush, and one nest with its blue, brown-spotted eggs was found. Black-chinned Hummingbirds were everywhere and their chattering as they chased each other about seemed very fierce and quite out of keeping with a creature so small. Black-headed Gros-

beaks vied with Western Robins for supremacy of sound in the morning chorus. Nests of the Spotted Sandpiper were found and a Green-winged Teal, suddenly springing from underfoot, revealed her down-lined nest with its eleven eggs hidden beneath a sage-brush a short distance from the stream.

One day a cow-man, who passed his lonely days on the range and made his home in a cabin a few miles distant, guided me to the

shoulder of a mountain across the valley. First we stopped to photograph the 200 or more closely clustered nests of the Cliff Swallow colony, then moved to where a scattering grove of aspen trees adorned the mountain bench. In its midst a pair of Western Red-tailed Hawks sailed screaming over their nest on which three lusty young could be seen watching our movements.

This little patch of woodland contains an interesting community of birds. In an area of not over three acres, four pairs of Red-naped Sapsuckers had their nests and were seen going in or emerging from their holes in the living aspen trees. Either these or others had occupied the grove in former years for there were many old Sapsucker holes which were now occupied by other birds. In them were nests of three pairs of Mountain Bluebirds, and twenty-four holes were occupied by nesting white-bellied Swallows. There were a few other holes probably used by Swallows also.

Sometimes two species were occupying the same tree. In one instance a partly dead aspen was



NESTING-SITE OF RED-NAPED SAPSUCKER

Young were being fed in the hole a little over halfway up. Mountain Bluebirds were nesting in another hole not seen, and a Swallow was found looking into the lowest hole visible. Photographed by T. Gilbert Pearson

found to be a regular apartment house for birds. Fifteen minutes' watching revealed the fact that in this one tree there were nests of the Sapsucker, Western Bluebird, and five pairs of Swallows. In all there were ten holes that had been made by Sapsuckers and they ranged from six to about twenty-five feet from the ground.

Near this remarkable tree a little Wren was seen in a Robin's nest that was built not over three feet from the earth. Two of the Robin's eggs contained small punctures, but we did not see the Wren make them. Two Wren's nests found here were under the loosened bark of trees, such nesting places as are chosen by the Brown Creeper.

In the Valley of Current Creek there were, of course, many other birds. Red-shafted Flickers were common on the slopes, and Yellow Warblers were as abundant as in Piedmont, North Carolina. Western Nighthawks, Mourning Doves, Wilson's Snipe, Brewer's Sparrows, Water Ouzels, Sage Sparrows, Audubon's Warblers, Macgillivray's Warblers, Western Grasshopper Sparrows, and many others furnished entertainment and subjects for study the livelong day.

About the camp-fire at night, after the fishing experiences of the day were recounted, various phases of the conservation of wild life in Utah were discussed. Commissioner Madsen told of the increase of Valley Quail and Ring-necked Pheasants, of the growing numbers of elk and the abundance of deer. On the 80,000-acre State Game

Preserve near the Strawberry there are, he told us, not less than 30,000 Sage Hens. "There is," he declared, "more game in Utah today than there has ever been known to exist before; while some species are less numerous others have shown vast increase." and this opinion apparently was shared by Governor Dern and other members of the party who sat smoking about the fire.

A little Flycatcher, perhaps the Western,



NESTS OF GREAT BLUE HERONS AND FARALLON CORMORANTS AT BASS POND, UTAH

One of the forty trees used as nesting-places and from which the birds had been shot. Photographed by T. Gilbert Pearson



spent much time about the camp. One day I saw it capture an insect and fly up the slope a few hundred feet to a small aspen. I scrambled up the rocky, sage-brush slope. The bird sat on her nest, but it contained as yet no young. Three times I saw her repeat the performance of taking food to her nest. How she loved the soft little nest in the aspen and how her mind must have been filled with the tender hopes of motherhood!

Upon returning to Salt Lake City, Mr. Madsen generously placed at my disposal one of his deputies and a car, and the next morning we were off on another trip a hundred miles or more to the south and west. Away in the deserts lie Chicken Creek Reservoir, Bass Pond and Clear Lake. Where one finds water in the desert one always finds birds. We encountered Forster's Terns, Western Grebes, Coots, Red-winged Blackbirds, Lazuli Buntings, Western Tanagers, Bullock's Orioles, Long-tailed Chats and many, many others.

It is a great thrill to the nature student to see for the first time what is to him a new bird. Hence I never tired of watching the remarkable flight of the Prairie Falcon that is common in these deserts of lower Utah. The Rough-legged and Swainson's Hawks also were great treats. In the cavity of a tree the nest of the Ash-throated Flycatcher came to light with its pale blue egg lying in a cushion of coyote hair.

The waters of Bass Pond Reservoir had killed many trees. In them I counted 184 great nests. About 40 of them had been built by Farallone Cormorants, the others were those of the Great Blue Herons. A short time before our visit, men interested in preserving game-fish had been to the colony with guns. Not a living Cormorant was now in sight, but the bodies of many, both young and old, were strewn upon the ground. 'I wonder how many valuable fish were saved for the angler by that barrage of gunfire that had swept from these nests the Herons and Cormorants of the Bass Pond rookery?

One of the greatest spectacles of bird-life in inland North America is to be found in the Bear River marshes of Utah. At the north-east corner of Great Salt Lake lies a vast flat watered by the Bear River as it nears the

lake. For the past fifteen years or more the demands of irrigation have caused most of the river water to be drawn off during the spring and summer. This results in greatly lowering the volume of water that at other times reaches the marsh. Under the fierce summer sun the water rapidly evaporates, leaving stagnant salt and alkali ponds. To these come the wild Ducks after their nesting season, from a thousand streams and sloughs over many thousands of square miles of western country. In vast multitudes they settle in the deadly waters of the Bear River marshes. Here they soon sicken and die. Some year the losses are enormous and every year without exception many perish. The years of greatest loss were 1914, 1919 and 1921. Mr. Madsen estimates that in 1921 not less than 2,000,000 wild Ducks died in this region. That it is the salt and alkali water that kills them seems to be proven by the well-known fact that of the many hundreds rescued by local sportsmen and placed on fresh water more than 90 per cent recover and fly away. Many of these birds which were banded returned to the poisoned waters and died. Other birds perish from the same cause. In 1924 the writer here saw the bodies of Coots, Phalaropes, Avocets and Stilts scattered about among the remains of numberless Ducks.

This sickness generally comes on late in August, but this year it began earlier. While at Brigham on June 28, 1927 I saw sick and helpless Gadwalls, Common Teal, Pintail and Redheads that had that day been brought in and placed in a pen by Archie Hill. He had accompanied Wharton Huber of Philadelphia, who showed me Ducks and a Canada Goose that he had picked up dead.

To impound the winter flow of the river water so as to keep the marshes reasonably fresh during the summer months is the object of a bill introduced in the last session of Congress. This measure carrying an appropriation of \$350,000 for the construction of a great levee between Salt Lake and the marshes is a matter of paramount importance in the preservation of the wild water-fowl of western United States.

The Bear River marsh is also a stupendous breeding territory for water-birds. Cinnamon

Teal especially here hatch their young in great numbers. There are thousands and thousands of handsome Avocets, Black-necked Stilts and Long-billed Curlews, the eggs and young of which we frequently saw.

There are immense numbers of White-faced Glossy Ibises. These and the Snowy Egrets have at least three populous colonies

in the tules, and we waded out to observe their household arrangements. Forster's Terns, Caspian Terns, White Pelicans and Western Grebes abound. I know of few more engaging sights than one of these great mother Grebes swimming about with a pair of downy young perched on her back.

T. GILBERT PEARSON

### MR. FINLEY TO LECTURE IN EAST

Mr. William L. Finley, for many years connected with the National Association of Audubon Societies, is scheduled to lecture throughout the East and South during the coming winter and spring. During January, 1928 his tour will take him through the Middle West; February and March on the Atlantic Coast; and April through the West and South.

Mr. Finley is best known through his remarkable studies of wild life, portrayed through the still and motion picture cameras. His lectures are illustrated with exceptional reels of motion pictures. 'Wild Animal Outposts' covers a tale of travel and adventure among the islands of the Bering Sea and along the Alaskan coast. One of his other subjects is 'Travels in the Land of Fear', illustrated with five reels of motion pictures, showing the home habits of rarer wild birds and animals seldom seen except in books and museums.

Audubon Societies and other organizations interested in arranging for a lecture should write The American Nature Association, 15 Boudinot Street, Princeton, N.J.



WILLIAM L. FINLEY AND A VALLEY QUAIL

### BIRD-PROTECTION IN GEORGIA

Some time ago this office had the pleasure of a visit from Mr. and Mrs. A. B. Haight, of Atlanta, Ga. Mr. Haight is president of the Atlanta Bird Club, an affiliated organization which is showing commendable activity in the cause of bird-study and bird-protection. The Club has succeeded in arousing and fostering a splendid interest in these subjects in the city of Atlanta. It has also made its influence felt in the matter of the revision of Georgia's bird-protective

laws, concerning which there has been correspondence with this Association for some time.

The Audubon Law, which years ago first gave protection to our song and insectivorous birds, and was adopted by nearly all the states in the Union, specifically prohibited the caging of these birds. Later, the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act with Great Britain gave similar protection to all species of this class of birds which are listed as mi-



'BIRD-O-GRAM' IN ATLANTA PARK

gratory. However, since many of our best loved birds are non-migratory, they do not receive protection under Federal law, but under the old Audubon law.

By way of emphasizing the thought that one is never quite sure when the fight for bird-protection is completely won, it may be noted that from time to time various state legislatures have been influenced to tamper with the law as originally adopted, thus weakening it in some of its most important features. For instance, in an unguarded moment, the Georgia law was revised to legalize, under certain conditions, the caging and keeping of song-birds "for pets." Then, too, the Meadowlark, a bird whose usefulness as a destroyer of insect-pests is well known, was very foolishly placed in the list of "destructive birds," a proceeding which moreover is in direct conflict with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

In view, therefore, of this backward step

which Georgia took with respect to her bird-protective laws it is heartening to learn in a recent letter from Mr. Haight that "the Legislature now in session is about to pass laws very favorable to Georgia birds, and considering many others which eventually will make Georgia a bird 'Utopia.'"

In this connection it is worthy of comment that Georgia's Game Commissioner, Peter S. Twitty, is in thorough sympathy with the work of this Association, and has been carrying on through the State Game Commission an educational program among the boys and girls of the state.

We quote again from Mr. Haight's letter, and also reproduce some photographs which he has enclosed. "Our city is helping the Atlanta Bird Club to spread the gospel of bird-protection and knowledge of birds by placing, in the parks, signs with pointed 'bird-o-grams' similar to the enclosed snaps."

—A. H. H.



'BIRD-O-GRAM' IN ATLANTA PARK



## A LETTER FROM AUSTRALIA

The first Bulletin of the International Committee for Bird Protection, an English edition of which was issued some time ago from this office and distributed throughout the eighteen countries represented on the Committee, has called forth much favorable comment. Among many letters received is the following from the Hon. Secretary of the 'Nature Lovers' League' of Queensland:

We are in receipt of the first issue of the Bulletin, and are keenly interested in the subject matter. To know in a cohesive way of the work that is being accomplished in so many parts of the world in the cause of bird protection is of great practical value to us here. We in Queensland have a very good Act in the 'Birds and Animals Protection Act of 1921,' and we have many fine sanctuaries—unfortunately we are too big a place (Queensland is 668,497 square miles) to police efficiently, and people constantly shoot through the accessible sanctuaries. Quite recently the Government appointed five rangers (at a good salary) to patrol the sanctuaries—that is a step in the right direction. In several cases in the country districts the school children have taken steps to have their State School precincts made sanctuary, and a regard for the wild life of their country is growing in the children. Just at present we are concerned about the Emus—they are thought to be instrumental in the spread of prickly pear, and a bounty bonus of 2/6 is being paid (by the Prickly Pear Commission) per head; and 1/- for each egg. Action must be taken shortly by the Queensland branch of the Royal Australian Ornithological Union to safeguard the birds. In a recent issue of 'The Emu' (the R. A. O. U. magazine) it was stated that one Emu's stom-

ach was found to contain 2,991 *injurious caterpillars*. Emus, in common with many other birds, do eat the pear fruit. Crows we see at times almost too gorged with the pear to fly. A few weeks back on an island in Moreton Bay where pear is plentiful every bird I called down—Honeyeaters, Whistlers, Flycatchers and Finches—had their heads and bills stained with the fruit. The authorities disclaim any idea of 'wiping out' the Emus; their object is to thin them out in the pear country. Though Egrets are plentiful in Queensland so far as we know there is no trade with their plumes. Parrots and Finches are trapped and exported in quantities but the authorities are alive to the evil and try to combat it.

In conclusion may I say that I thoroughly appreciate the honor of a place on the International Committee for Bird Protection. The 'Principles' are excellent and I subscribe to them wholeheartedly.

I am, Yours faithfully,

(Signed) LILA MACARTHUR MAYO

NOTE: In a letter received some weeks later from another member of the 'Nature Lovers' League' of Queensland is the following: "It may interest you to know that the Prickly Pear Commission, a body established by the Government of this State to take measures for the eradication of that terrible vegetable pest the Prickly Pear (*Opuntia*) have for sometime past waged war on the 'Emu' as an agent in spreading the plant. I am glad to say that it is now the intention of the Commission to annul their edict on the bird and that within the next two months it will be restored to the fully protected list. Our local Association takes credit to itself for its influence in bringing about this decision. Sincerely yours,

(Signed) GEO. H. BARKER

## THE MISSISSIPPI FLOOD AND WILD LIFE

During the tragic days when the Mississippi flood was taking its toll of human life and property there were those who were not unmindful of the wholesale destruction which was being wrought in varying degrees upon the wild life of the vast region inundated.

Representatives of newspapers in this city and various friends of the Association, at different times, made inquiry as to whether the Paul J. Rainey Wild Life Sanctuary had been, or was likely to be disastrously affected

by the onrushing waters. To these solicitous inquirers it was replied that the Rainey Sanctuary was more than a hundred miles beyond the flood plain of the Mississippi and could not possibly be in danger of inundation.

Subsequent events proved this answer to be correct, yet it was little dreamed at the time the statement was made that the mad rush of waters would go tearing southward through the Atchafalaya Basin until it

reached New Iberia and Abbeville just north of the Rainey Sanctuary, when it spread harmlessly over the great coastal marshes.

A good deal has been written by competent observers regarding the effect of the great flood upon the wild life of the devastated regions, and there is substantial agreement that the destruction has been very great upon certain forms. Occurring as it did during the nesting season of many of our birds it is easy to understand that the flood must have taken great toll of nests, both with eggs and young, not only of ground-inhabiting species but of those nesting in bushes and trees as well. It is also agreed that the young of many fur-bearing and other wild animals, as well as many adults of some species, perished in great numbers.

An official of the Louisiana Department of Conservation estimated that in certain inundated sections of that state 50 per cent of the muskrat population doubtless was destroyed.

Of the states suffering from the flood Arkansas had the greatest number of square miles devastated. Judge Lee Miles, of the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission and a warm friend of this Association, has written for *Field and Stream* a very graphic account of the flood as it affected the wild life of his state. We quote as follows:

Minks, raccoons and otters seemed to take care of themselves fairly well, and there appears to be little loss among them. Opossums were unable to cope with the situation, and nearly all of them perished. They did not seem to know how to take care of themselves in the flooded area. In spite of the opossum's ability to climb to safety in the tree tops, many dead ones were found floating on the water.

The flood took a terrible toll of rabbits. In the early stages, before the tops of some of the levees were covered, many dead rabbits were found as though they had died of disease. Others, on drift or floating logs, had great difficulty in procuring something to eat. Some few were seen remarkably high in thick willow branches, feeding on willow bark and leaves. They were, of course, easy prey for bobcats and other predatory fur-bearers. . . .

Squirrels suffered but little. They had plenty of buds and other things to eat, and drinking water was no item. Quail and Turkeys were great sufferers. The Bob-

whites took to trees and would fly to floating logs to feed on insects, as all land was covered. In many places thin layers of trash had collected, and the Bob-whites mistook this to be a more substantial landing place.

When a bird alighted on this flimsy drift, he would frequently break through into the water, and then the flapping of his wings carried him under. If he could get his bill over a small chunk and partly submerge it by pulling it slightly under his body, he could climb out. But usually his efforts would serve more quickly to take him under.

This year's nesting of both Turkeys and Quail in that area is destroyed. The flood came at about the time when both these birds were nesting or had just hatched their broods. The water will not recede in time to permit them to go back and nest again. If they reach higher ground and nest again, the covies will be smaller in number and come at the time of extreme heat and will not mature into hardy birds before the gunning season.

A great many of the Turkeys may fly to high ground and nest immediately. The Bob-white will not be able to make such a wide range of flight, and those of them which do not drown will remain in the flood area until its vegetation appears again.

The flooded territory was the best game area of the state. Food for maturing the young birds and animals existed in abundance. The game in this locality grows rapidly and to large specimens. Nature has provided a wonderful cover for their protection in a dense forest from which they are able to gather all varieties of foods. It is my opinion that, including the few deer that were shot and the many more that drowned, a loss of from 30% to 40% has been sustained. There has been possibly a loss of 80% of opossums, 70% of rabbits, 90% of wild hogs, and at least 50% of Bob-white Quail. . . .

Where the flood waters have receded there is nothing green. All vegetation is dead and covered with a layer of dirty silt up to the high-water line. The surface of the earth is like the murky bed of a lake. There is a death-like stillness. Not even the song of the cricket or the katydid. The birds have gone. The accustomed bellow of the bullfrog, so frequently heard in that locality, is heard no more.

The ghostly silence of the night is broken only by the occasional hoot of an Owl, and even that has a plaintive, pathetic appeal which reminds one of a funeral note sung to the departing spirits of so many, many of his lost companions. The scene is, in reality a living picture of desolation wrought by the unmerciful torrent of a terrible flood. It leaves in the mind a picture one will never forget.—A. H. H.

COMMERCIAL FISHERIES *vs.* FISH-EATING BIRDS

All those who are interested in the cause of bird-protection are familiar with the periodic outbursts against some bird or birds which are suddenly deemed to be 'destructive.' Among such outbursts, that against certain fish-eating birds, such as Pelicans and Cormorants, is quite common. Mention was made not long ago in these columns of a campaign of destruction which last autumn was planned against the Brown Pelicans of Florida, yet which was thwarted by vigorous and timely action on the part of this Association and others interested in the welfare of this picturesque and comparatively harmless bird. Mention was also made of similar agitation which was started in Texas, where a bill was actually passed by one branch of the General Assembly calling for the payment of a bounty on both Pelicans and their eggs.

The fight to save the Brown Pelicans of Texas is not yet won, but it is confidently hoped that should the bill come up again at the next session of the Legislature, sufficient pressure may be brought to defeat this ill-advised and foolish legislation.

In view of the fact that the commercial fishermen are responsible for the agitation against the Brown Pelican, holding that these birds are highly destructive to the food-fishes of that region, it has been very instructive to the writer, to peruse, at the suggestion of Dr. Frederic A. Lucas, two bulletins recently published by the Bureau of Fisheries. One is Document No. 1019, 'Examination of the Summer Fisheries of Pamlico and Core Sounds, N. C., with special reference to the Destruction of Undersized Fish and the Protection of the Gray Trout.' The other is Document No. 1009, 'A Preliminary Report of the Marine Fisheries of Texas.' A careful study of these bulletins is sufficient to convince even the most skeptical that the commercial fishermen have only themselves to blame for the decline of fisheries. In the first-mentioned document are to be found the results of careful studies, including exact data concerning the coastal fisheries of North Carolina. Now Pelicans do not inhabit this

region, and it is not claimed that other fish-eating birds are destructive to the fish. However, the report declares that the fisheries of the state have shown a steady decline during a period of forty-five years, and this in spite of the fact that this general shortage has brought about an increased rivalry between the operators of different types of nets—pound nets and haul-seines.

The following statement from a letter written in 1883 by L. H. Hardy, a North Carolinian, to the United States Fish Commissioner, throws much light on the subject: "We have in Carteret County, N. C., a great many fish, and our people live by catching and selling them. For the last four years our waters, both in the sounds and ocean, have been obstructed by Dutch nets [pound nets], which have proved very destructive to our fish. Thousands of fish too small to be serviceable are caught by these nets and suffered to remain in them until they are dead and then turned out to drift upon the shore in numbers that would seem incredible to relate. . . . Thus millions of good fish are being destroyed yearly that are not worth a cent while so small. . . ."

As a result of the admitted decline of the North Carolina fisheries, a controversy has arisen between those using the two types of nets (pound nets and haul-seines), each contending that the particular gear used by the other is the more destructive. Thus, writing in 1912, C. H. Sterling, a fish-dealer of Washington, N. C., said: "As to pound nets, dragnets and seines, some man has said that the pound nets are the root of all evils. I think he is mistaken. I have seen seines pull in hundreds of small fish that a pound net would not catch." Again, in 1909, J. H. Potter, of Beaufort, N. C., said: "I have been engaged in the fish business for thirty years. I commenced before the first pound nets were set in North Carolina, and was instrumental in putting in the first pound net. I have seen that net destroy more fish than have been caught in North Carolina since."

In view of this controversy and the progressive depletion of this important industry



the United States Bureau of Fisheries has, in full coöperation with the North Carolina Bureau of Fisheries, made an extensive survey of the fisheries of this region.

It would be out of place here to go into the details of the summarized report of this investigation, but it throws much light upon the wasteful processes that not only attend the fisheries investigated, but that also must attend those in many other parts of our country where similar methods are practised. For instance, the report shows that the monthly destruction of five species of under-sized fish is 17, 31, 59, 35, and 51 per cent respectively. A maximum wastage of 78 per cent of one species (gray trout) was recorded in certain districts during the months of June and July.

We now come to Document No. 1009 which constitutes a 'Preliminary Report on the Marine Fisheries of Texas.' The first sentence of the report is as follows: "The idea that it will not be long before the fish-supply of Texas and the Atlantic Coast

States will be exhausted is fast gaining recognition."

From a perusal of this report one gains the impression that the same processes of destruction which have been described above are going on in Texas, although here the commercial fishermen have sought to camouflage the situation by heaping the burden of guilt upon the unoffending Pelican. By this means they may hope to avert legislation restricting their own operations and at the same time, perhaps, succeed in having the Brown Pelican forfeit his life for a crime of which he is not guilty. In fact, a prominent Texas official stated to the writer that this was their motive.

The writer feels that although what he has written may appear to have more to do with the conservation of fish-life than with that of bird-life, yet these comments and observations are quite timely since they throw much light on the real cause of the decline of fisheries and thus exonerate our fish-eating birds from the burden of blame.—A. H. H.

## NEWS AND NOTES

### Biological Survey Makes Water-Fowl Census

In view of the fact that some difference of opinion exists with respect to the present status of wild water-fowl in North America, the Biological Survey has inaugurated a careful and comprehensive census. It is hoped this will give specific and unbiased information regarding the numbers, distribution, and movements of the Ducks, Geese, Swans, and Coots throughout the entire country, including Canada, Alaska and Mexico. A very gratifying response is reported from Federal and state officials and from sportsmen's and conservationists' organizations, and individuals.

The results of this extensive coöperative investigation will be awaited with eager interest by all those who are concerned in the fortunes of our wild water-fowl.

It is also worthy of note that western sportsmen are coöperating with the Department of Agriculture by raising a fund to be

used by the Biological Survey in investigating conditions in the sections of California, Oregon and Utah where such enormous fatalities have occurred among water-fowl on account of alkali poisoning. It is planned to make a careful survey of conditions with a view to constructing dikes for the purpose of restoring the water to these native haunts of Ducks, Geese and other water and marsh-loving birds.

### The Twenty-Second Annual Convention of the International Association of Game, Fish, and Conservation Commissioners

It was the privilege of the writer to attend the Twenty-Second Annual Convention of the International Association of Game, Fish and Conservation Commissioners, which was held in Hartford, Conn., August 12. There were in attendance Game Commissioners from all over the United States and Canada, as well as high Federal Officials

entrusted with the administration of our game and bird-protective laws. Many others interested in the cause of wild life conservation were also present.

The outward conditions at Hartford were in sharp contrast to those which prevailed during the meeting held last September in Mobile when the delegates were imprisoned during the two days' session by the tropical hurricane which devastated southern Florida. At the meeting held this year, ideal weather conditions were enjoyed and opportunity was thus given to the delegates to visit game farms and fish-hatcheries which are being administered for the State of Connecticut by its very efficient State Board of Fisheries and Game, the president of which is Frederic C. Walcott of Norfolk. Mr. Walcott during the past year has also been president of the Association of Commissioners which held its annual meeting in Hartford, and to his able leadership and executive ability is due in no small measure the success of the meeting. It may also be said in passing that Mr. Walcott is a Life Member of this Association and is deeply interested in its various activities and achievements.

The sessions of the Convention were well attended and many valuable and interesting papers were presented. Not the least instructive feature was the impromptu reports given by various Game Commissioners and the discussions which followed.

Among those on the program were Paul G. Redington, Chief, Bureau of Biological Survey, who gave an instructive talk on the various activities of the Survey and outlined a program of the research and administrative work which is being undertaken by this Bureau; also Chief Federal Game Warden, Harold P. Sheldon, who is responsible for the enforcement of the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act with Great Britain. It was especially pleasant and helpful to hear and talk with these men who play so vital a part in the cause of wild life conservation in our country. Among others were E. Lee LeCompte, Maryland State Game Commission; I. T. Quinn, Alabama Game Commission; Judge Lee Miles, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission; William C. Adams, Massachusetts Game Commission; Ray P. Holland,

Editor of *Field and Stream*; Seth E. Gordon, Executive Secretary of the Izaak Walton League of America; Dr. Arthur A. Allen of Cornell University; Carlos Avery and John B. Burnham of the American Game Protective Association; Dr. A. K. Fisher and Frank G. Ashbrook of the Biological Survey; and Hoyes Lloyd of the Department of Interior, Ottawa, Canada.

Toward the close of the Convention it was the privilege of the writer to give an illustrated talk on some phases of the work of the National Association.

#### Land Presented to State of Massachusetts for Wild Life Refuge

The Associated Committees for Wild Life Conservation have recently purchased and formally turned over to the state of Massachusetts a tract of thirty-nine acres of spruce-covered land on the westerly side of Watatic Mountain in Ashburnham. This is to be used as a wild life sanctuary for all time. It adjoins the land which was given to the State by the Federation of Bird Clubs of New England.

The State Division of Fisheries and Game in commenting on the receipt of the land says: "These gifts emphasize the splendid work the Federation and the allied committees have done in bringing about the establishment of wild life sanctuaries. To the thinking conservationists of the country it has been apparent for some years that our only hope to maintain a permanent and sufficient stock of desirable forms of wild life is through the establishment of such permanent sanctuaries."

#### Fight to Save Australia's Native 'Bear'

Another illustration of the necessity, to which lovers of wild life are everywhere driven, of being perpetually on guard if they would save for future generations some of the most striking and interesting forms, has just come to us from Australia.

During the month of July a delegation consisting of representatives of the Royal Australian Ornithologists' Union, the National Council of Women, the Boy Scouts'

Association, The Royal Society and Federal Committee upon Export of Marsupial Skins, The Naturalists' Club, The Brisbane Women's Club, and the Nature Lovers' League, called upon the Government and asked it to cancel the proclamation of an open season for native bears. It is felt by those most familiar with the situation that the so-called 'native bear' of Australia, the Koala, is in great danger of extermination unless immediate steps are taken to secure its further protection. In his 'The Wild Animals of Australia' (published in 1926) Le Souef writes:

"The single species of this genus (*Phascolarctus*) is the quaint Koala, or native bear, a creature which, perhaps, holds the affection of Australians more than any other of their wild animals. The Koala feeds entirely on the eucalyptus, selecting smooth barked species with a high oil content in their foliage. As far as we have been able to ascertain there are only a few species which form suitable food trees. Though at one time extremely numerous, the Koala is now over the greater part of its range very scarce. This is largely due to a disease which swept them off in millions in the years 1887-8-9, and again from 1900 to 1903. The Koala has one young one in the year—born in June and carried in the pouch for three months, then on the back until the end of the year, when it is able to shift for itself. The skin of the Koala forms a thick serviceable fur, that will stand hard usage. Only the most callous of shooters, however, can bring themselves to shoot such a child-like animal."

We shall wish our friends in Australia success in their fight to save from destruction, not only the Koala, but other unique and interesting forms, whose extinction would represent an irreparable loss to scientists and nature-lovers everywhere.

#### Musk-Ox Sanctuary Created

An important step has recently been taken by Canada in the work of conserving the musk-ox by the creation of a sanctuary in the valleys of the Hanbury and Thelon rivers, east of Great Slave Lake in the Northwest Territories. This effort of the Dominion Government is not actuated by sentiment

alone, for the musk-ox is regarded as a game animal of wonderful possibilities.

The necessity for the action which has been taken has recently been revealed by reports of explorers and wild-life experts who have related that conditions are changing, even in the lonely and inaccessible regions of the Canadian Arctic.

The region selected has been a kind of 'no man's land' from time immemorial but owing to the recent rapid encroachments by trappers and traders from Hudson Bay on the east, and from the Mackenzie on the west, some quick action is deemed necessary in order to save the musk-ox from destruction. Acting on this advice, the Department of the Interior has set aside an area of 15,000 square miles. The district is about 200 miles long and 75 miles wide, and will be under the administration of the Northwest Territories and Yukon Branch of the Department of the Interior. It is also reported that this area will make an ideal sanctuary for other wild animals and for birds.

#### German Edition of the Bulletin of the International Committee for Bird Protection

Through the kindness of Dr. Albert Hess of Bern, a German edition of 5,000 copies of the first Bulletin of the International Committee for Bird Protection has recently been published. This edition will not only go to members of the Committee but will be widely circulated in Europe.

It is also due to the kindness of Dr. A. Chappelier of Versailles that a French edition of 5,000 copies of the Bulletin is just now coming from the press. This in like manner will receive wide distribution.

There are at present many indications that ornithologists and bird-protectionists throughout the world are realizing as never before that the problem of bird-protection, in so far as it concerns our migratory birds, is international in its scope. The International Committee for Bird Protection in a large way will have justified its existence if it should succeed, in some measure at least, in arousing an interest in the necessity for world-wide coöperation.—A. H. H.



## WILD LIFE AND AUTOMOBILES

Some time ago the writer took occasion in these columns to call to the attention of readers of *BIRD-LORE* the killing of birds by automobiles. In the article to which allusion is made he recorded his observations made while Field Agent for Indiana, during which period he drove many thousands of miles over the paved highways of that State. So far as is recalled no published statement on this subject had been noted prior to that time. However, other observers recently have been noting the toll which automobiles are taking of wild life and from time to time accounts have been published.

The writer, during his busy days as Field Agent, had little or no time for collecting exact data, and in the article alluded to little more was done than to comment in a general way and to call attention to the new menace to wild life which has come to exist in the ever-increasing number of motor-cars that are constantly moving over our highways.

When about July 1 it became his privilege to motor with his family to central Indiana, it was decided at the beginning of the journey that an accurate count be made of all wild birds and animals found killed on the roadways. In like manner count was made on the return trip. The route was from Leonia, New Jersey, through the northeastern corner of Pennsylvania and across the state of New York to Buffalo, and thence southwestward across Ohio and over the National Old Trails' Road to a point some forty miles beyond the city of Indianapolis. The first part of the return trip was over the same route but the central portion of the state of Pennsylvania was crossed from the western to the eastern border.

At the end of this motor trip, which amounted to a little more than 1,900 miles, it was found that 321 dead birds had been noted on the pavements, 14 skunks, 7 squirrels, 3 chipmunks, 10 rabbits, 3 opossums, and 3 toads. Doubtless there is no immediate cause for alarm in these figures, only it occurs to the writer that if similar destruction in proportion to mileage is being wrought over the hundreds of thousands of miles of highways which thread our land in every direc-

tion, then no inconsiderable toll must be taken of the wild life of our country.

In the trip just recorded it was obviously impossible to make identifications of all the dead birds; but among those observed were Indigo Buntings, Cuckoos, Whip-poor-wills, Robins, Bluebirds, Flickers, Red-headed Woodpeckers, Screech Owls, English Sparrows, and Grackles. A greater percentage of fatalities were observed in Ohio and Indiana, where Flickers and particularly Red-headed Woodpeckers were found on the pavements. The writer confesses that he is greatly concerned about the last-mentioned bird. There is no doubt that it is being killed in this manner in considerable numbers throughout Ohio and Indiana and other states of the Middle West. During his recent vacation period, spent in Indiana, it was no uncommon sight to find freshly killed Red-heads on roads where the previous day none had been observed. On one occasion, when driving only 15 miles per hour, he was compelled to slow down and swerve to one side in order to keep from running over one of these birds.

A very busy country physician, whose practice takes him over a wide territory, stated that he unavoidably, during the course of a year, killed many Red-heads, and further commented that in his opinion this species in time is bound to be greatly reduced in numbers in Indiana.

As further evidence bearing on this subject it is significant that, just as the writer was about to jot down these notes, he should receive a letter from a member in Washington, Indiana, who says: "The paved highways have many dead birds, especially Red-headed Woodpeckers, killed by autoists." Another member, from the state of New York, writes: "Apropos of autos killing birds, several of my friends and relatives who have motored to California more than once inform me that they saw scores of Mourning Doves, Brown Thrashers and occasionally Red-headed Woodpeckers, killed by motorists, especially in Nebraska and Iowa. Perhaps they fly slowly or are more fearless. My nephew felt it could with care be avoided as in several trips he killed none."

In the writer's opinion this last observation is much to the point as it bears out his own experience. However, the number of those persons who would deliberately slow down or swerve to one side in order to avoid running over a wild bird or animal is all too few. On the contrary, there are no doubt many persons who experience a certain thrill in running over birds or animals on the road-

ways and there is only now and then a motorist who is willing to momentarily sacrifice speed for the sake of saving the lives of these helpless creatures.

In view of these facts it is very clear that there is a need for a campaign of education with reference to influencing the drivers of motor-cars to respect the lives of birds and animals encountered on the highways.

—A. H. H.

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